



Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall

GNÍOMHÚ AR SON NA HAERÁIDE

CLIMATE ACTION

Donegal County Council

2024
2029







DRAFT CLIMATE ACTION PLAN



Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall
Donegal County Council



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Draft Climate Action Plan Photography Credit

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MESSAGE FROM CATHAOIRLEACH Cllr MARTIN HARLEY

I am delighted to introduce Donegal County Council's Climate Action Plan. This plan signifies a collective commitment, not only to our local Donegal community but to the global effort to combat climate change and safeguard our environment.

Climate change is no longer a distant threat; its impacts are being felt right here in Donegal. From more frequent and severe weather events to shifts in our natural landscapes, the signs are undeniable. But with these challenges come opportunities for transformation, innovation, and lasting change.

This Climate Action Plan is a testament to the dedication and ingenuity of our community. It is the result of extensive collaboration among local communities, experts, businesses, and council officials. It embodies our shared vision for a sustainable future where our environment thrives, our economy prospers, and our quality of life continues to improve.

Our plan covers a wide spectrum of themes, Governance and Leadership, Transport, Built Environment, Natural Environment and Infrastructure, Community Resilience and Sustainability & Resource Management. It reflects our commitment to leaving no one behind, ensuring that all members of our community benefit from our climate actions.

As we move forward, we recognize that the journey to a more sustainable future will not be easy. There will be challenges to overcome, but we are committed to addressing the climate crisis. We are not simply responding to a global emergency; we are building the future for our children and grandchildren.

I extend my gratitude to all those who contributed their time, expertise, and passion to the creation of this plan. Together, we will implement its provisions, monitor our progress, and adapt to the evolving needs of our community and the planet.

I am very heartened by the level of involvement from our communities in helping shape this plan.

Each one of us has a role to play in shaping a sustainable and resilient future. Together, we can create a legacy of environmental stewardship that will be remembered by future generations.



MESSAGE FROM CHIEF EXECUTIVE JOHN G. MCLAUGHLIN

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing our world today. It is already having a significant impact on our planet and our people, and these impacts are only expected to worsen in the years to come.

Local authorities have a vital role to play in addressing climate change. We are responsible for a wide range of services and infrastructure that can have a major impact on our carbon footprint. We are also in a unique position to engage with our communities and businesses to help them reduce their emissions.

This Climate Action Plan sets out our vision for a more sustainable future for Donegal County Council. It sets out how this Council aims to significantly reduce carbon emissions by 2030 through a set of ambitious but achievable targets to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and build resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The plan and its targets are the result of extensive consultation with our communities and stakeholders. We are also working closely with our neighbours across the border in Derry and Strabane District Council. We have listened to all their concerns and ideas, and we have developed a plan that reflects their priorities.

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to the development of this plan. I am confident that it will provide us with a roadmap to making Donegal a more sustainable place to live, visit and work.

CLIMATE ACTION PLAN



OUR VISION

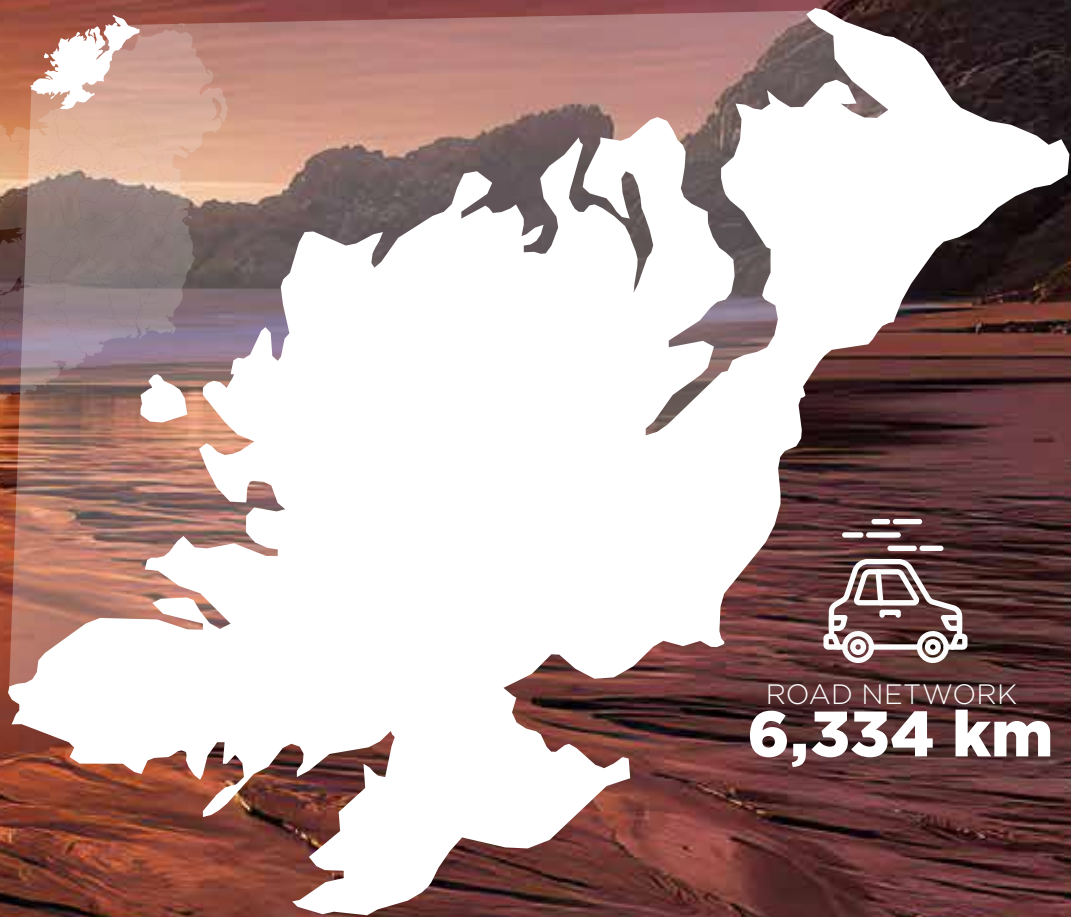
To be a Climate Resilient, Biodiversity Rich, Environmentally Sustainable and Carbon Neutral Donegal by no later than the end of 2050 level.



OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To deliver transformative change and measurable climate action across Donegal County Council within our own organisation and services, through leadership, example and mobilising action at a local level.

OVERVIEW OF DONEGAL



COUNTY AREA
4,861 km²



POPULATION
167,084



ROAD NETWORK
6,334 km



COASTLINE LENGTH
1,132km



HIGHEST MOUNTAIN
751m
Errigal



PIERS AND HARBOURS
100



AGRICULTURE
9,240 farms
average farm size is 28 ha
(CSO, 2010).Gaeltacht: 935 km²



NATURA 2000
26%
of the county is designated for the
protection of flora and fauna





Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall

GNÍOMHÚ AR SON NA HAERÁIDE

CLIMATE ACTION

Donegal County Council

1

INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION

The Draft Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) 2024 to 2029 sets out how Donegal County Council (DCC) will be responsible for enhancing climate resilience, increasing energy efficiency, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, across its own assets, services, and infrastructure, for which it is fully accountable, whilst also demonstrating a broader role of influencing, advocating, and facilitating other sectors, to meet their own climate targets and ambitions. This is necessary to ensure that the environmental, social, and economic benefits that come with climate action, can be fully realised.

1.1 Need for Climate Action Plan

Local Authorities have an important role in the delivery of both climate mitigation and adaptation measures. This is set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, which also frames Ireland’s legally binding climate ambition, to delivering a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 51% by 2030. This will place the country on a trajectory to achieving climate neutrality by the end of 2050. In preparing the Draft Plan, the Council has also taken account of other relevant climate legislation and policy, a climate change risk assessment and a climate mitigation baseline assessment, at a County scale, which are included as part of this LACAP.

The Climate (Amendment) Act 2021 specifically requires all local authorities in Ireland to prepare and make a Climate Action Plan, in consideration of wider national climate and energy targets, addressing both mitigation and adaptation measures:

CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION

relates to changing how we live, move, consume and manufacture, so as to reduce and/or eliminate the production of harmful greenhouse gases, it also includes how we best use our land.



CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

refers to dealing with the impacts of climate change and involves taking practical actions to manage risks, protect communities and strengthen the resilience of the economy (e.g. from flooding, sea level rise etc).



The Draft Climate Action Plan sets a clear pathway for Donegal County Council to:

- **actively translate national climate policy** to local circumstances with the prioritisation and acceleration of evidence-based measures;
- **assist in the delivery of the climate neutrality objective** at local and community levels; and
- **identify and deliver Decarbonising Zone(s) (DZs) within the local authority area** to act as test bed(s) for a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures in a specifically defined area, through the identification of projects and outcomes that will assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective.

Set against the backdrop of an evolving and ambitious framework of national climate policy, Donegal County Council maintains a strong commitment to mainstreaming climate action across its own operations and functions, whilst also pursuing a leadership role on climate action, at the local level. The Draft LACAP demonstrates a coherent approach to climate action across the administrative and political structure of the local authority. The LACAP is subject to approval by the Elected Members of the local authority, following public consultation and engagement. A range of other plans, including the Council’s Corporate Plan and County Development Plan, also support the Draft LACAP.

1.2 Role of the Council in Climate Action

The Council has unique capabilities to deliver on a wide range of climate policy objectives. In order to clarify its role and scope in terms of climate action the Council has defined areas and levels of responsibility:

Whilst the Council has an important role in climate action, it is not responsible for other sectors, for example business and enterprise, agriculture, renewable energy, transport etc in meeting their own national emissions reductions targets set out by the National Climate Action Plan.

Figure 1.1 illustrates the the scope of the local authority’s responsibility on climate action.

The Council will also continue its efforts in rolling out ambitious climate action projects, drawing down available sources of funding, pursuing citizen and stakeholder engagement, all supported by a progressive policy framework. The Council will launch the Climate Action Fund Strand 1 - Building Low Carbon Communities. This is a fund for local authorities across the country, to support and build low carbon communities.

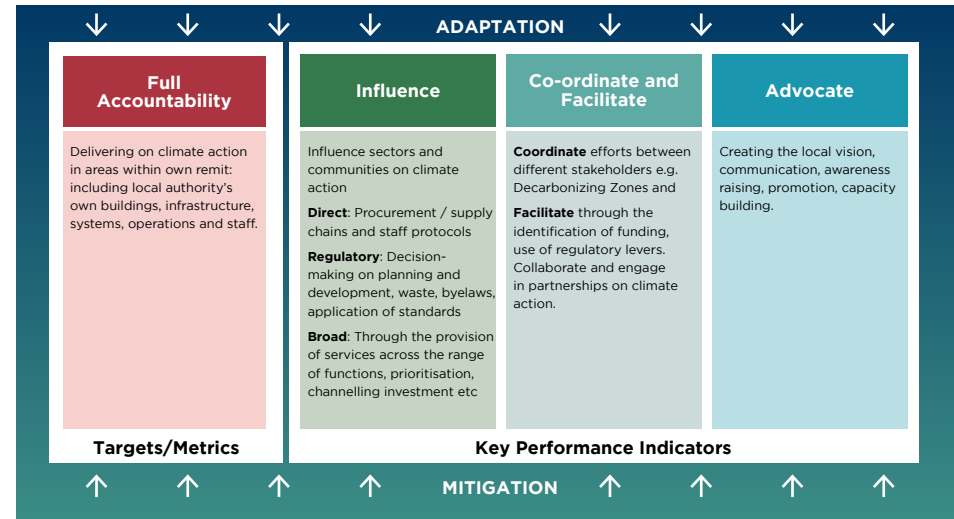


Figure 11: Local Authority Scope on Climate Action (Source: Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines, 2023)

In a changing climate, the aim is to become more resilient to all future possibilities, allowing local communities to thrive and work towards real solutions that are meaningful, inclusive, fair and accessible for all, thereby prioritising a just transition.

The Council is also collaborating through partnership with our neighbours in Northern Ireland, most notably through the North West Climate Action Framework which has been established with Derry City and Strabane District Council. This Framework allows for consistency of approach by combining efforts, knowledge and resources on a cross border and cross sectoral basis to pilot new initiatives and projects in the region and ensure efficient and effective climate action.



Image representing Co. Donegal and Co. Tyrone. Source: North West Climate Action Framework.

1.3 Overview of Climate Change

Climate change is increasingly understood to be the most critical, long-term global challenge of our time, its impacts continue to be felt both worldwide and at home. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC's) Working Group I Sixth Assessment Report, confirms overwhelming evidence that the climate has changed since the pre-industrial era and that human activities, through greenhouse gas emissions, are the principal cause of that change. It states the unequivocal cause of global warming has been human activities, with global surface temperatures reaching 1.1°C above 1850-1900, in the 2011-2020 period.

Ireland's climate echoes that statement. Figure 1.2 compares the global temperature rise since 1900 to Irish temperatures. Ireland is in line with the global temperature increases, following 2022, being a year of record-breaking extremes, in both temperature and precipitation (rainfall). Met Éireann stated that 2022 was 'the warmest year on record'. This would see Ireland's temperature above the long-term average for the 12th consecutive year. Furthermore, 2022 saw record breaking temperatures observed in Ireland during the summer, recording the second highest temperature ever recorded in Ireland at 33°C.

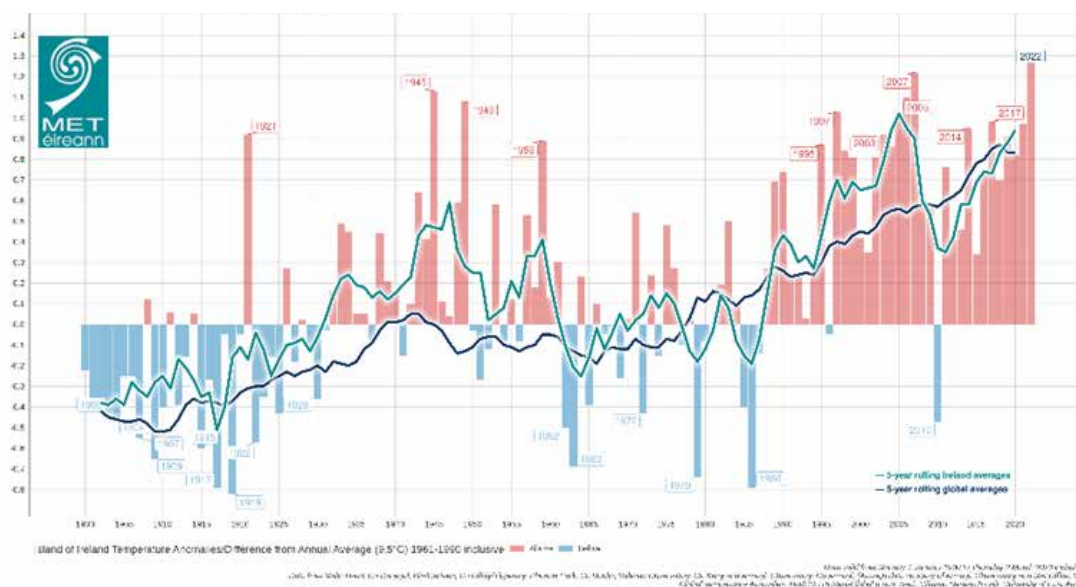


Figure 1.2 Island of Ireland 1900-2022 Temperature (°C) Anomalies (difference from 1961-1990)
(Source: Met Éireann)

This is reiterated in the precipitation observations from 2022, where rainfall was recorded at below the long-term average at most stations. There was variability in rainfall throughout 2022, with extremes being felt in each of the seasons, resulting in a drier Summer and Spring, and a wetter Autumn and Winter.

Global mean sea level increased by 20 cm between 1901 and 2018. The trend in global mean sea level rise has been consistently rising since 1901. Ireland has so far seen a similar rise in sea level with an average of 2-3 mm per year. A warming climate has caused a rise in sea level, through the loss of sea ice and thermal expansion (the increase in the volume of water due to heating) resulting from the warming ocean.

Ireland has suffered from adverse climate impacts already and recent extreme weather events have highlighted the vulnerability of individuals, businesses, communities, sectors and infrastructure to climate change, emphasising the need for urgency on climate action across all sectors of society.

For example, storms such as Arwen and Barra in 2021 most notably, left 59,000 homes and businesses without power (Climate Action Plan, 2023). The adverse impacts of climate change can often compound wider reaching social, environmental and economic challenges. This can increase vulnerability and sensitivity to a changing climate and climate extremes.

Based on observed changes in climate and its impacts, Met Éireann, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other climate scientists, are able to make robust projections on future climate patterns in Ireland and globally. The EPA, Marine Institute and Met Éireann published The Status of Ireland's Climate Report in July 2021. Future climate projections for Donegal County Council can be summarised as follows:

- Climate projections indicate that the climate trends observed over the last century will continue and intensify over the coming decades;
- Temperatures are increasing and are expected to continue to increase and across all seasons;
- Significant reductions in levels of average precipitation (rainfall) are expected in Spring and Summer, whilst projections indicate the increased occurrence of extreme precipitation events, particularly during Winter;
- Projections show little change in average wind speed and direction. The frequency of extreme wind conditions are expected to increase, particularly during Winter;
- Based on current trends, Donegal will see an increase in sea level rise, similar to what has been experienced to date. Donegal is extremely vulnerable to sea level rise, due to its expansive coastline and the large number of the population that has settled on the coast;
- Increases in the frequency of fluvial (river) and pluvial (surface water) flooding;

- Increases in the frequency and intensity of coastal flooding and erosion;
- Increases in the frequency and intensity of summer heat waves, extreme temperatures and drought;
- Reductions in the frequency of frost and snowfall; and
- An increase in the duration of the growing season (phenological cycle)

The state of Ireland's climate today and how it may look in the future can be brought together in one simple conclusion. Ireland's climate has changed relative to the 1900's, it has undoubtedly warmed along with global temperatures, bringing about an array of impacts that are associated with a warmer climate and more extreme weather events.

1.4 Climate Policy Context

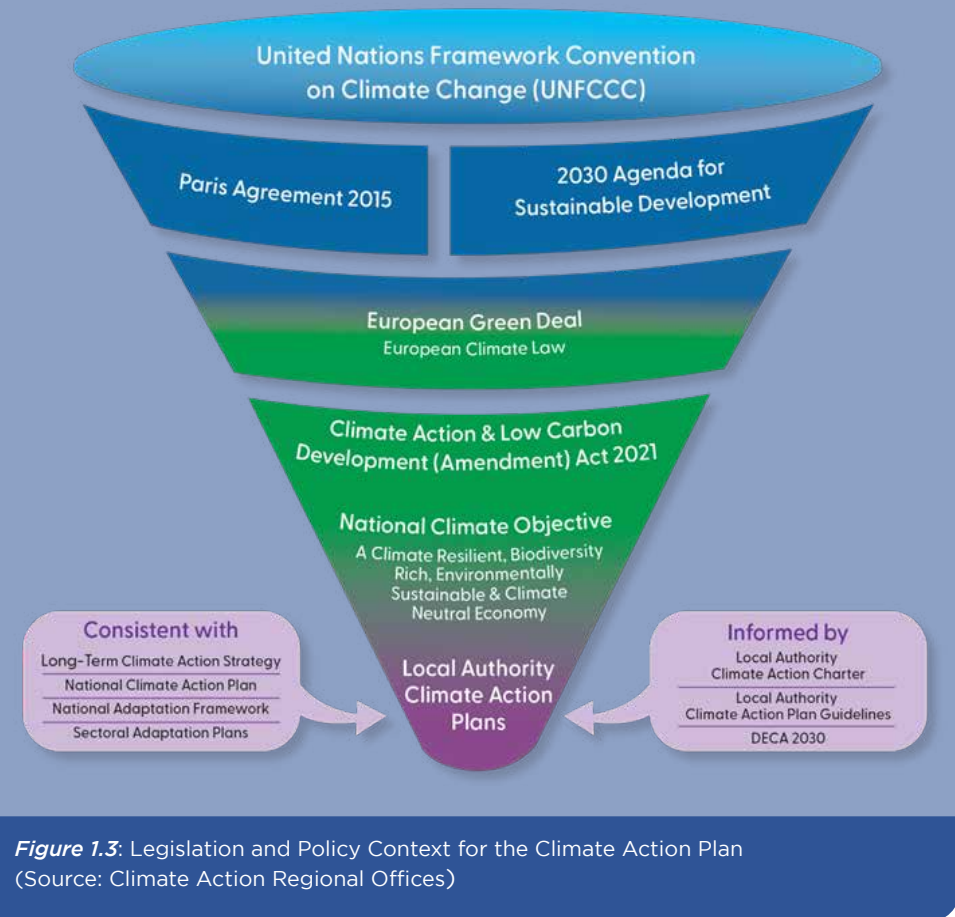
Climate action is given impetus by the scientific evidence that supports the findings of human influence on climate change and the most recent legally binding international treaty on climate change, which sets the framework for ambitious and strengthened policy responses, the Paris Agreement 2015. Consequently, this Draft LACAP is set within a broader context of international, EU, national and sectoral climate policy. This is represented in Figure 1.3.

1.4.1 International Climate Change Policy

It has been recognised that successfully tackling climate change requires cooperation and ambition on an international level. Since the establishment of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1994, countries have sought to build international cooperation to limit the increase in the average global temperature and deal with the impacts of climate change, that result from these temperature increases.

These efforts led to the signing of the Paris Agreement 2015 at the Conference of the Parties 21 (COP21). The Paris Agreement 2015 is a legally binding international treaty on climate change which was signed by all 196 member countries, including Ireland, and entered into force on 4th November 2016. Through two clearly defined goals the Paris Agreement strives for progressive and ambitious climate action over time to avoid dangerous climate change by:

- Holding global average temperature increases to well below 20°C and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels; and
- Increasing the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience.



Another International agreement closely linked with the Paris Agreement is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which was adopted by UN Member States in September 2015. At the Agenda's core are 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals aim to "end poverty, protect the planet and improve the lives and prospects of everyone, everywhere." The 17 SDGs contain 169 targets to be achieved by 2030. In 2019, world leaders called for a 'decade of action' in order to achieve the Goals within this timeframe. The SDGs are also addressed in Section 6 of this LACAP.

Towards achieving greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions as part of Paris Agreement commitments, the European Commission, in December 2019, announced the European Green Deal aimed at making Europe the first climate neutral continent. The Deal seeks to achieve no net emissions

of GHGs by 2050, to decouple economic growth from resource use, and to leave no one behind. The EU introduced a set of proposals to align the EUs climate, taxation, energy, and transport policies to support achieving this aim. The European Climate Law made these targets legally binding, which also includes achieving a reduction in net greenhouse gas emissions of at least 55% by 2030.

1.4.2 Climate Change Policy in Ireland

Climate change policy in Ireland now reflects the ambition of the EU and actions that are required to confront the challenges of climate change. Working towards the National Climate Objective the Climate (Amendment) Act 2021, promotes a sustainable economy and society where greenhouse gas emissions are balanced or exceeded by the removal of greenhouse gases. Through progressive economy-wide carbon budgets, sectoral ceilings, a suite of strategies devised to promote a combination of adaptation and mitigation measures, as well as robust oversight and reporting arrangements, climate policy is working to scale up efforts across all of society and deliver a step change on ambitious and transformative climate action to 2030 and beyond to 2050.

The Climate Action Plan 2023, launched on 21st December 2022, is the second annual update to the States' Climate Action Plan 2019 and the first to be prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, and following the introduction, in 2022, of economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emission ceilings. Climate Action Plan 2023 sets out a roadmap to 2025 towards taking decisive action to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero, no later than by the end of 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government.

Ireland published its first National Adaptation Framework (NAF) in 2018, which set out the context to ensure key sectors and local authorities, can assess the key risks and vulnerabilities of climate change, implement climate resilient actions, and ensure climate adaptation considerations are mainstreamed into national, regional and local policy making.

Ireland's current Long-term Strategy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions sets out indicative pathways, beyond 2030, towards achieving carbon neutrality for Ireland by 2050. The Strategy builds upon the decarbonisation pathways set by the carbon budgets, sectoral emissions ceilings and the national Climate Action Plan, to ensure coherent and effective climate policy. It is underpinned by analysis of transition options across each key sector of the economy and provides a crucial link between Ireland's 2030 climate targets and the long-term goal set by Ireland's National Climate Objective and the European Climate Law.

Sectoral Climate Adaptation Plans have been published across Government departments, in response to the National Adaptation Framework. Each Plan

identifies the key risks faced across the sector and the approach being taken to address these risks and build climate resilience for the future. They were developed applying a six-step adaptation planning process described in Sectoral Planning Guidelines for Climate Change Adaptation, published by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. The Plans address the following sectors: Agriculture, Forestry and Seafood, Biodiversity, Built and Archaeological Heritage, Transport infrastructure, Electricity and Gas Networks, Communications Networks, Flood Risk Management, Water Quality and Water Services Infrastructure and Health.

The Local Authority Climate Action Charter, signed by Donegal County Council in October 2019, represents a commitment to scale up efforts and play a key role locally and nationally in delivering effective climate action. It tasks all local authorities with providing robust leadership in advancing climate action at regional and local levels, with adhering to the UN SDGs, in particular Goal 13 Climate Action, as well as reducing emissions from their own operations and to collaborate and partner with local enterprise, community groups, citizens as well as public, private, and educational sectors on climate action initiatives.

Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030 (DECA 2030) is the local government strategy on climate action published in April 2021. The strategy represents an overarching sectoral commitment to ensuring a coherent approach to climate action across the administrative and political structures of all 31 local authorities. At a sectoral level the strategy communicates a general strategic intent through an envisaged leadership position, to engage the local authority network in effective climate action. Within the sector, the overall strategy represents a top-level consensus on the approach to climate action and a strong commitment to the prescribed leadership role. The strategy is a stated roadmap for local authorities in delivering the required decarbonisation and adaptation responses to climate change.

1.4.3 Local Authority Climate Action Planning

The Donegal County Council LACAP strengthens the links between national and international climate policy and the delivery of effective climate action at local and community levels, through place-based climate action. The intrinsic value of the climate action plan is that it plays a significant role in reinforcing the commitment by the local government sector to lead on climate action at local and national levels, as reflected in the local government strategy DECA 2030. Over its preparation and implementation, the Council's LACAP offers an opportunity to bring together critical stakeholders across communities and businesses to build a vision for a climate neutral future.

Donegal County Council and other local authorities across Ireland, are already well positioned at the forefront of climate action in Ireland. Donegal County Council plays a significant role in terms of delivering adaptation and mitigation measures at local and community levels including cross-border

collaboration with neighbouring Local Authorities in Northern Ireland . We are entrusted to work through our regulatory and strategic functions to operationalise the ambitious national climate targets and policy at local levels, to assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective.

The Donegal County Council LACAP is part of longer-term efforts that require a sustained and planned response to support the delivery of the climate neutrality objective at local and community levels. This Draft LACAP provides a mechanism for bringing together both adaptation and mitigation actions to help drive positive climate action and outcomes across the local authority and its administrative area. The framework of climate actions set within the plan, configures the arrangement of climate actions within a defined structure that ensures alignment between on the ground actions and the high-level vision that the plan aspires to deliver.

This Draft LACAP has been prepared in accordance with the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines, published by the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications in March 2023.

1.5 Structure of the Climate Action Plan

This Draft LACAP has taken into full consideration international and national climate change policy and legislation as well as the most up-to-date knowledge on current levels of climate change as well as its impacts and projections for the future. In showing the outcome of this process, this Draft Climate Action Plan is set out in four parts.

Chapter 2, the evidence base used to inform on climate action within the jurisdictional area of Donegal County Council is presented, including climate change risks and emissions baseline profile.

Chapter 3, the LACAP outlines its framework for climate action including the Plan Vision, Mission, Strategic Goals, Objectives and Actions.

Chapter 4 focuses on Donegal County Council's Decarbonising Zones, Carndonagh and Falcarragh/Gortahork.

Chapter 5 sets out the Council's approach to implementing actions, measuring progress, the use of metrics as well as how the Council will report on actions over the lifetime of the Plan.







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GNÍOMHÚ AR SON NA HAERÁIDE

CLIMATE ACTION

Donegal County Council

2

EVIDENCE-BASED CLIMATE ACTION

EVIDENCE-BASED CLIMATE ACTION

2.1 Importance of Evidence Based Climate Action Planning

The 2023 Climate Action Plan (CAP 23) reaffirms emissions pathways for Ireland set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 - to halve Ireland's emissions by 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. Relevant targets for Local Authorities include:

Local Authorities must improve their energy efficiency by 50% by 2030, compared with a baseline of 2009 (or earlier).

Local authorities must also reduce their heating and transport emissions by 51% by 2030, in comparison to a 2018 baseline.

Nationally we must reduce GHG emissions by 51% by 2030 compared to a 2018 baseline and achieve climate neutrality by 2050 - Local Authorities are obligated by the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 to produce plans consistent with this target.

Evidence-based climate action planning is crucial for addressing the urgent and complex challenges of climate change and is essential for informed decision-making, efficient resource allocation, effective mitigation and adaptation measures, public engagement, international collaboration, and ongoing evaluation. By relying on scientific evidence and data, policymakers can develop robust and effective strategies to address the urgent challenges of climate change.

This involves developing strategies and policies based on scientific evidence, data, and analysis to effectively mitigate greenhouse gas emissions, adapt to climate impacts, and foster sustainable development.

Accurate understanding of the problem: Climate change is a multifaceted issue with far-reaching consequences. Evidence-based planning ensures decision-makers have access to the most up-to-date scientific research and data, allowing them to comprehend the causes, impacts, and potential solutions associated with climate change. It helps to avoid misinformation, scepticism, and uninformed decision-making.

Efficient resource allocation: Climate action planning often involves significant investments in infrastructure, technologies, and policies. Evidence-based approaches enable the prioritisation and efficient allocation of limited resources. By considering data and evidence, policymakers can identify the most effective and cost-efficient actions, leading to optimal use of resources and maximizing the impact of climate initiatives.

Identifying effective mitigation measures: Evidence-based planning enables the identification of the most effective and feasible mitigation measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It involves evaluating the potential benefits and drawbacks of different strategies, technologies, and policy interventions, allowing decision-makers to select the options that offer the greatest emission reductions while considering local contexts and constraints.

Informing adaptation strategies: Climate change adaptation is essential to minimize the impacts of climate-related hazards and safeguard vulnerable communities, ecosystems, and economic sectors. Evidence-based planning helps identify the specific risks and vulnerabilities associated with climate change, guiding the development of appropriate adaptation measures. It ensures that adaptation actions are tailored to local conditions, based on robust scientific assessments.

Building public trust and engagement: Evidence-based climate action planning enhances transparency, accountability, and public trust. By relying on sound scientific evidence, policymakers can demonstrate that their decisions are based on rigorous analysis rather than personal or political preferences. This fosters public support and engagement, facilitating the implementation of climate policies and initiatives.

Facilitating Local, Regional, National, and international cooperation: Climate change is a global issue requiring collective action. Evidence-based planning provides a common language and foundation for international cooperation. It enables countries to share data, research, and best practices, facilitating collaboration and the development of coordinated approaches to tackle climate change at all scales.

Monitoring and evaluation: Evidence-based planning supports ongoing monitoring and evaluation of climate actions. By setting measurable targets, collecting data, and regularly assessing progress, decision-makers can gauge the effectiveness of their strategies and policies. This feedback loop allows for adjustments and improvements, ensuring that actions remain aligned with the evolving understanding of climate change.

2.2 Donegal County Council Climate Change Risk Assessment

In Donegal, climate change is posing challenges in many ways, from the increased frequency of flooding, to increased occurrences of heat waves. This section provides an assessment of climate change risks and impacts for County Donegal.

Globally, recent decades have seen a change in weather patterns. There has been an increase in the number of extreme weather events occurring throughout the world. In 2023, Ireland recorded the wettest July on record

whilst the southern European counties experienced a heatwave. Weather patterns are changing, and it appears the rate of change is accelerating. Ireland and Donegal are no exception to the global trends.

A summary of the key climatic and weather-related changes in Ireland and Donegal are shown in Figure 2.1.

Highlights of Observed Climate Change for Ireland and Donegal

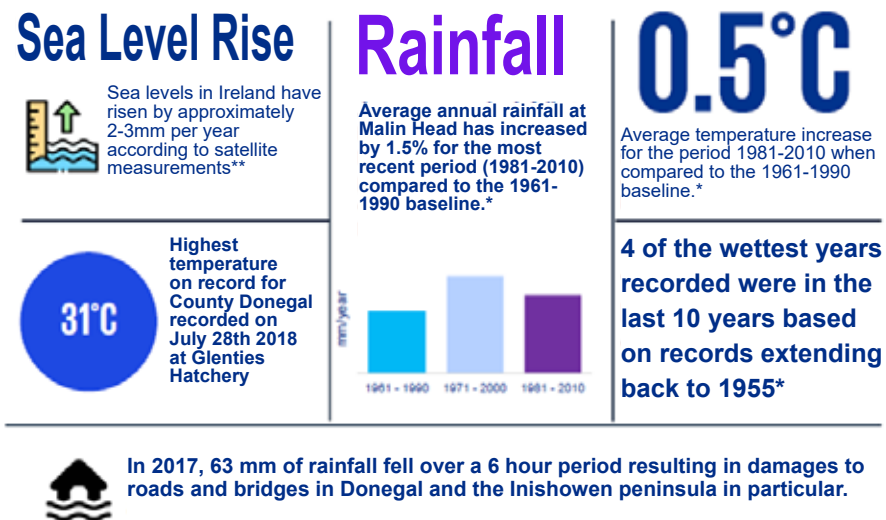


Figure 2.1 – Highlights of Observed Climate Change for Ireland and Donegal
Source: KPMG, Donegal County Council Climate Change Risk Assessment, 2023.

A Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) is the methodology that was used in this LACAP to assess past climatic and extreme weather-related events in Donegal and develop a climate impact baseline from which future impacts can be predicted. The period of past climatic and weather-related events studied was 1973 to 2022.

A profile of climate hazards was developed and used to consider future risks that may affect Donegal, establishing their frequency, their intensity and identifying specific areas of Donegal that are most vulnerable. This is a qualitative assessment from which adaptation actions were identified which reduce / mitigate and manage these risks.

The Climate Action Regional Office (CARO) for Atlantic Sea Board North (ASBN) engaged Consultants KPMG Sustainable Futures to undertake a Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) in accordance with “Technical Annex B - Climate Change Risk Assessment of the Local Authorities Climate Action Planning Guidelines”.

2.2.1 Developing the Climate Hazard Profile

The climate hazard profile provides an overview of climate and weather-related hazards to have impacted County Donegal. The Profile developed through Donegal County Council’s Climate Adaptation Strategy (2019) has been updated in accordance with recent experiences of extreme weather and climate variability.

2.2.2 Frequency of the Climate Hazards

The frequency of occurrence of the climate hazards identified through the Profile have been assessed based on analysis of past events and Donegal County Council staff feedback.

	Hazard Type	Current Frequency	Description
	Heatwave	Common	Occurs once in a 2 to 10 year period
	Drought	Occasional	Occurs once in a 10 to 100 year period
	Cold spell	Occasional	Occurs once in a 10 to 100 year period
	Heavy snowfall	Common	Occurs once in a 2 to 10 year period
	Severe windstorm	Frequent	Occurs once in a 1 to 2 year period
	Coastal Flooding	Common	Occurs once in a 2 to 10 year period
	Coastal Erosion	Common	Occurs once in a 2 to 10 year period
	Pluvial Flood	Common	Occurs once in a 2 to 10 year period
	River Flood	Common	Occurs once in a 2 to 10 year period

Source: KPMG, Donegal County Council Climate Change Risk Assessment, 2023.

2.2.3 Climate Change Risk Assessment Methodology

The steps to undertake this qualitative assessment, from which the current risks can be assessed and future risks to 2050 can be predicted, are detailed below:

STEP 1: CURRENT CLIMATE RISKS AND IMPACTS	• Develop profile of climate hazards
	• Characterise climate hazards frequency
	• Exposure, vulnerability and impacts for Donegal
	• Impact assessment (service delivery)
	• Current climate risk matrix
STEP 2: FUTURE CLIMATE RISKS AND IMPACTS	• Assess future changes in climate hazards frequency and intensity
	• Assess future changes in exposure and vulnerability
	• Assess emerging hazards and potential future climate risk
	• Future climate risk matrix
	• Uncertainty assessment

The baseline information was used to examine the impacts on the delivery of services by the Council and a current climate risk matrix was then developed based on the frequency of hazard and the associated level of impact already seen in Donegal.

2.2.4 Exposure, Vulnerability and Impacts for County Donegal

County Donegal has been exposed to heatwave events (defined as 5 consecutive days with temperatures >25°C) over the period 1973-2022 with a wide range of impacts across the county. The most notable and costly impact relates to repair and maintenance of road surfaces and responding to uncontrolled fires. In addition, County Donegal has experienced drought conditions over the period as exemplified by the drought events in 2007 and July 2018.

County Donegal experience cold spells events on an occasional basis and heavy snowfall events on common basis with significant county wide events reported in 2009, 2010 and 2018. These events have wide ranging impacts across the county including disruption of transport routes, damage to buildings, and significant repair and maintenance costs.

County Donegal has been frequently exposed to wind storms over the period 1973-2022, notable examples being Storms Ali, Barra, Desmond and Eunice. Impacts have been experienced across the county and primarily relate to disruption of transport, electricity and communication networks. Severe windstorms also result in health and safety risks, e.g. associated with treefall.

County Donegal is exposed to coastal storms resulting in inundation of coastal communities. A number of areas are subject to frequent and recurring flooding. County Donegal has 1,235km of coastline (1,031km mainland, 204km islands). 240km of this extent is soft coastline, of which 130km are deemed to be at risk.

For County Donegal in the period 1973-2022, pluvial and fluvial flooding have occurred on a common basis. County Donegal was impacted multiple times by fluvial flooding over the last two decades. These events have wide impacts across the county including disruption of transport routes, damage to buildings, livelihoods and environmental impacts. The most notable impacts of pluvial flooding are direct damages to buildings and infrastructure and mobilisation of pollutants.

2.2.5 Impacts on Donegal County Council's Service Delivery

Heatwaves and drought result in a range of impacts for service provision by Donegal County Council. The primary impacts relate to increased maintenance and repair requirements of road surfaces and increased pressure on emergency response because of the increased incidence of uncontrolled fire. Decreased levels of water supply due to drought conditions put increased pressure on Local Authority staff working under the Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Uisce Éireann. In addition, high temperatures result in staff and public discomfort and an increased requirement for mechanical and passive cooling. Heatwaves and drought put additional pressure on community infrastructure such as parks.

Cold spells and heavy snowfall have significant impacts across County Donegal with direct and indirect consequences for the delivery of services. Impacts are related primarily to maintenance and repair of assets and infrastructure, closure of local authority offices and services, and increased demand on emergency response.

Severe windstorms can result in the closure and/or disruption of Donegal County Council Offices and services. Primary impacts of severe windstorms are associated with disruption of services and infrastructure due to loss of

power supply and communications, damage to local authority assets and infrastructure, increased pressure on emergency response and redeployment of staff to support clean-up following a severe windstorm event.

Coastal flooding results in a range of impacts for service provision by Donegal County Council. Impacts of coastal flooding are associated with clean-up and repair costs, damage to assets and infrastructure and damage to environmentally sensitive areas. Coastal erosion has limited impact on service provision by Donegal County Council with impacts primarily associated with damages to transport infrastructure, detrimental impacts on coastal habitats and increased requirement for their monitoring and remediation.

Pluvial and river flooding have resulted in a wide range of impacts for Donegal County Council. Impacts are primarily associated with clean-up and repair costs, water quality issues due to overland flows of pollutants into water courses, damage to environmentally sensitive areas, increased pressure on emergency response services and supporting communities during and following flood events.

2.2.6 Current Climate Risk Matrix

Based on reported information and in consultation with Donegal County Council, a current climate risk matrix for County Donegal has been developed based on the frequency of hazard and the associated level of impact. Figure 2.2 shows the current risk for identified hazards within County Donegal.

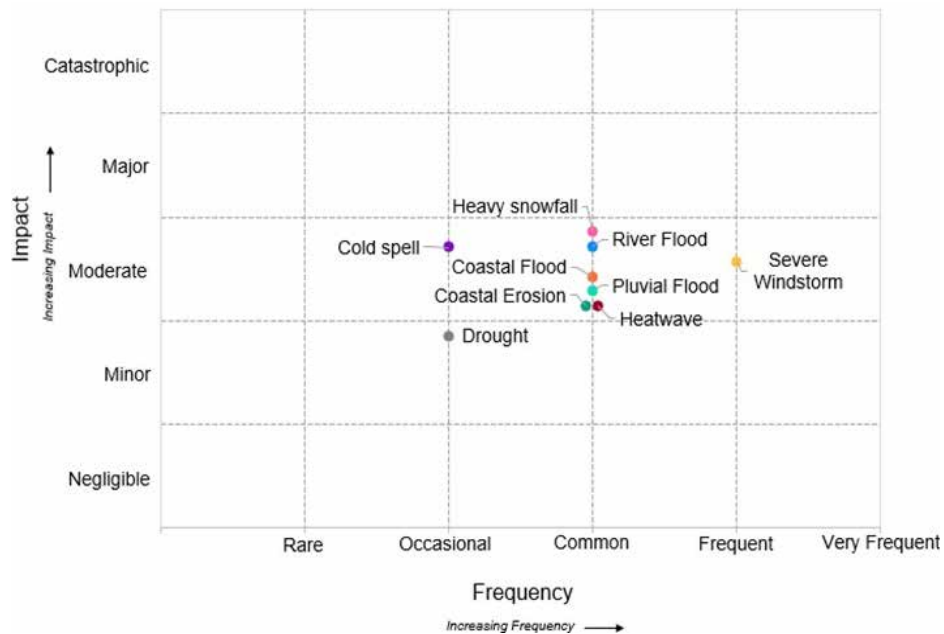


Figure 2.2: Current Climate Risk Matrix for County Donegal (Source, KPMG Donegal County Council Climate Change Risk Assessment, 2023).

2.3 How is Donegal Predicted to Change into the Future?

The 2016 census (www.cso.ie) recorded a population of 159,200 in County Donegal. This is predicted to increase by just over 10 % to 176,500 by 2028 (National Planning Framework). The most recent Census of 2022 indicates that this prediction is on track with the population having already grown by 5% to 167,084 since 2016 (www.cso.ie).

The population of Letterkenny is targeted to increase by 8,000 between 2016 and 2040 (Regional, Spatial and Economic Strategy, Northern & Western Regional Assembly). The Census 2022 indicates a population increase of 3,275 since 2016 (17%).

In order to support ongoing and predicted population growth, it is anticipated that there will be subsequent growth in development in the county and in the North West Region as a whole. These predicted changes in population and development must be considered when predicting future risks and impacts.

















Climate risks may increase, decrease, or emerge in the future due to a change in either the frequency and severity of climate hazards and/or changes in exposure and vulnerability.

Looking to the future, further analysis is required which builds on the assessment of current climate risks and impacts and then expands the analysis to include projected changes in frequency and intensity of climate hazards.



2.3.1 Future Climate Risk Matrix

Having identified and assessed the range of climate hazards and impacts already experienced by Donegal County Council, the projected changes in the frequency and intensity of climate hazards (acute and chronic) were assessed to understand how existing climate impacts and risks may be exacerbated. The information below summarises the climate projections for each hazard based on Nolan and Flanagan (2020).

Hazard	Projected Change	Future Frequency
 HEATWAVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projections indicate an overall increase in average temperature of between 1.1°C and 1.5°C for County Donegal relative to the 1981-2000 period. Under a high emission scenario, projections indicate that heatwaves will become more frequent by mid-century. 	FREQUENT 
 DROUGHTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summer rainfall is expected to reduce in the future when compared with the baseline period of 1981 to 2000, in both the RCP4.5 and RCP8.5 scenario contributing to potential drought conditions. 	COMMON 
 COLD SPELL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Because of the increasing temperatures, a decrease in the number of frost days and ice days is projected for the 2041-2060 period when compared with the baseline period of 1981 to 2000, for both the RCP4.5 and RCP8.5 scenario. 	RARE 
 HEAVY SNOWFALL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The annual snowfall in the region is projected to decrease substantially by the middle of the century for the RCP4.5 and RCP8.5 scenarios. 	OCCASIONAL 
 SEVERE WINDSTORMS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projections of storms are subject to a high level of uncertainty. By mid century, projections indicate that average wind speed will remain similar to those currently experienced. There is limited evidence of a potential increase in the frequency of more intense storms. However, more research is needed to confirm this increase. 	FREQUENT 
 COASTAL FLOODING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rising sea levels projections under a high emissions scenario indicate an increase of up to 0.20 m by 2050 which will increase the frequency of coastal inundation. 	FREQUENT 
 COASTAL EROSION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A rising sea level is strongly linked with coastal erosion and an increase in erosion rates and extent. 	FREQUENT 
 PLUVIAL FLOODING FLUVIAL FLOODING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projections indicate an increase in the frequency of heavy rainfall days (days with precipitation >30mm) for County Donegal with some areas projected to see increase of up to 80%. This will likely result in an increased frequency of associated fluvial and pluvial flooding. 	FREQUENT 

The potential impacts to the County and on the Council's service delivery has been assessed based on the projected changes to the frequency of climate hazards. This has been combined to form a Future Climate Risk Matrix.

The risk matrix below shows the future changes in risk for the identified hazards within County Donegal. For each hazard there is a solid marker, which identifies the future risk, and a hollow marker showing the current risk. The dotted line in between these markers shows the change between the current and future risk.

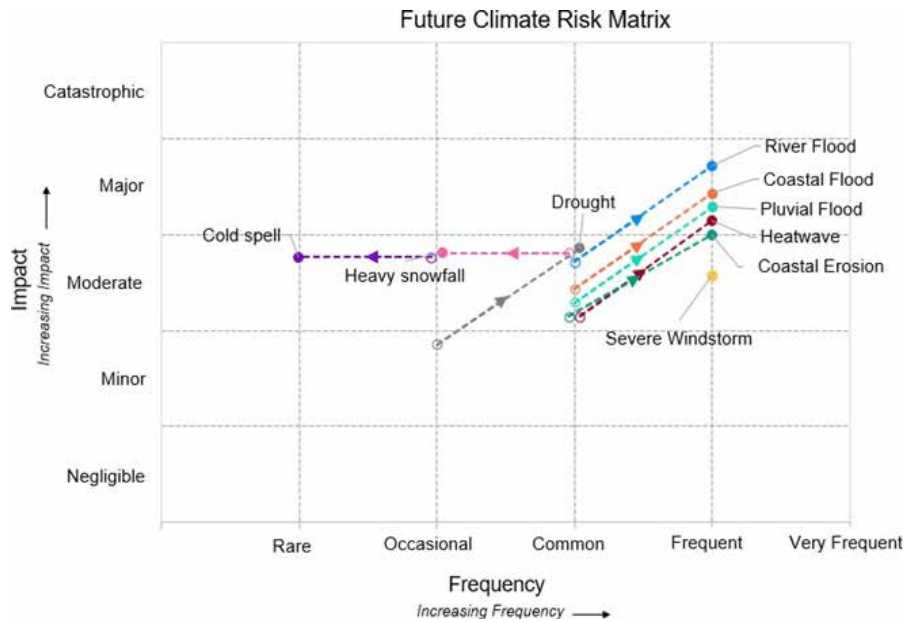


Figure 2.3: Future Climate Risk Matrix for County Donegal (Source, KPMG Donegal County Council Climate Change Risk Assessment, 2023).

- The risk of existing hazards such as river, pluvial, heatwave, coastal flooding and erosion is projected to increase in the future because of projected increases in the frequency of hazard events and also due to an increase in the areas, assets and populations exposed to these hazards.
- Droughts although already experienced in County Donegal, are expected to occur more frequently due to climate change and with a greater impact on County Donegal in the future. The risk is exacerbated by not only projected changes in the frequency of drought but also because of projected population increases and in the proportion of the population considered vulnerable (those aged 65 years and over). Droughts can therefore be considered as emerging risk for the region.

- Although the frequency and impact of severe windstorms is thought to be unchanged in the future, these events will remain a risk for County Donegal.
- The impact of heavy snowfall and cold spells on County Donegal remains constant, however, due to the potential decrease in hazard frequency, the overall risk of these hazards is projected to reduce in the future, resulting in less risk.

2.3.2 The Impacts Of Climate Change On Donegal



Recent experiences of river and pluvial flooding events (e.g., 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2022) have resulted in damages to homes and buildings (e.g. Elm Park, Bunrana), and infrastructure, disruption of transport networks (e.g. Road networks and Sli na Sliante path), and impacts on business (e.g. New Row in Donegal town) and local economy. Projected increases in the frequency of extreme precipitation events will result in increased surface water and riverine flood risk for County Donegal.



Coastal erosion and coastal flooding already pose a significant risk for County Donegal and have resulted in temporary inundation of buildings, loss of transport infrastructure, damage to water treatment and wastewater infrastructure. Rising sea levels will increase the rate of coastal erosion and frequency of coastal inundation, resulting in an increased coastal erosion and flood risk for County Donegal.



Severe windstorms are currently experienced on a frequent basis in County Donegal and result in wide-ranging impacts, including disruption to energy supply, communications infrastructure and transport networks. Projections indicate no significant change to this frequency.



County Donegal experienced both a heatwave and drought in 2018, with heatwaves also recorded in 2021 and 2022. These events resulted in damage to road surfaces (e.g. boiling tar in Killyclug), increased demand placed on water resources (hosepipe ban) and recreational areas and detrimental impacts on freshwater quality and fish populations. Projected increases in the frequency of heatwaves and drought conditions will mean that events currently experienced on an infrequent basis will become more frequent.



Recent experiences of cold spells and heavy snowfall events in 2018 (e.g. Storm Emma) demonstrated the wide range of impacts for County Donegal. These included, amongst others, increase in the frequency of trips and falls, disruption to road networks, power outages and impacts on water resources and on business and local economy. Projected increases in average temperature and decreases in the frequency of snowfall indicate a decrease in the frequency of cold spells, heavy snowfall, and their associated impacts

To increase resilience, Donegal County Council will need to proactively plan for and adapt to the current and future climate change risks identified.

2.4 Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG)

Greenhouse Gases cause global warming. The Global Warming Potential (GWP) of Greenhouse Gases compare the global warming impacts by measuring how much energy the emissions of 1 tonne of gas will absorb over time.

CARBON DIOXIDE	CO ₂ is the main GHG through anthropological activities, causing global warming. It is present in all sectors and easily outweighs the other GHGs in terms of the raw mass of emissions. As the reference gas, its Global Warming Potential (GWP) is 1 regardless of the period used. CO ₂ stays in the atmosphere for hundreds of years.
METHANE	CH ₄ is the second most impactful gas emitted by activities in County Donegal. It is primarily emitted from agricultural activities and waste. Methane has a GWP of 29.8. It absorbs much more energy than CO ₂ but stays in the atmosphere for only about 10 years.
NITROUS OXIDE	N ₂ O has a GWP of 273. Agriculture is the main sector emitting N ₂ O. It stays in the atmosphere for over 100 years.
F-GASES	Fluorinated gases trap substantially more heat than CO ₂ does per tonne. Sulphur Hexafluoride (SF ₆) has a GWP of 25,200, Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) have a GWP ranging from 4 to 14,600, Perfluorinated compounds (PFCs) range from 6,630 to 11,100 and Nitrogen trifluorides (NF ₃) has a GWP of 17,400. SF ₆ is present in Industrial Processes. In the national inventory, F-gases are grouped as their sector accounting for about 1% of national emissions.

2.5 Baseline Emissions Inventory

The understanding of the work we need to do to reach our climate targets comes from an understanding of where we are now. It is necessary to establish our baseline GHG emissions to gain a full picture of the gap to reaching our targets and of where we need to focus our attention in doing so.

The Climate Action Regional Office for Atlantic Sea-Board North (CARO ASBN) commissioned Bable Consulting Limited to undertake a County based Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI) for Donegal, Mayo, Sligo and Galway. The BEI for each County were prepared in accordance with the methodology provided in "Technical Annex C: Climate Mitigation Assessment of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines (DECC, 2023).

A BEI refers to a comprehensive assessment of the GHG emissions produced by a specific entity, such as a company, organization, or geographic region, during a particular period. It serves as a benchmark or starting point against which future emission reductions or mitigation efforts can be measured and evaluated.

By comparing future emissions against the baseline, organizations and policymakers can assess the effectiveness of their emission reduction efforts and adjust as necessary.

The 2030 Emission Reduction Target as set out in the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 is a 51% absolute reduction in overall GHG emissions by 2030 and setting us on a path to reach net-zero emissions by no later than 2050, as committed to in the Program for Government (Government of Ireland, 2021).

An absolute reduction means that regardless of activity in the county, the total GHG emissions across the County by 2030 must be 51% less than the total GHG emissions in the baseline year, which in this case is 2019.

For the BEI report and the data analysis, all GHGs are converted and reported as CO₂ equivalent emissions, or CO₂eq. Some emissions are actual carbon dioxide (CO₂), some are methane (CH₄), some are Nitrous Oxide (N₂O) and some are F-gases. All emissions are converted into CO₂eq so that they can be easily compared.

2.5.1 County Donegal Baselines Emissions Inventory

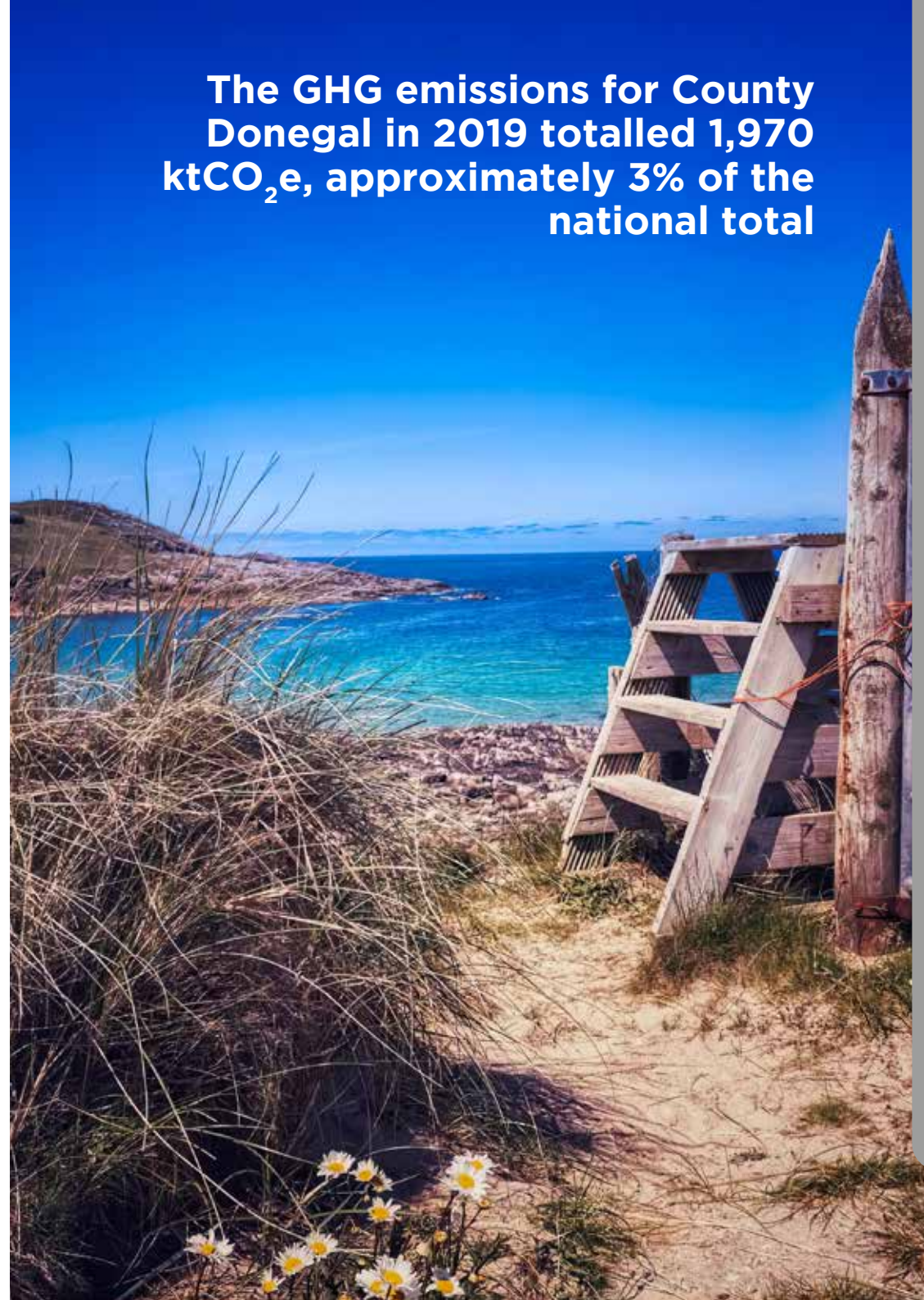
Technical Annex C of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines outline the Tier 2 approach to be taken in the development of the County level BEI. Tier 2 is the bottom-up approach for data analysis, which combines national and local-scale datasets to look at county wide GHG emissions across various sectors including:

- Residential
- Commercial Services
- Manufacturing
- Industrial Processes
- Agriculture
- Transport
- Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF)
- Waste
- Fluorinated gases

The primary approach to calculating the BEI for County Donegal was using the MapElre dataset of Spatial GHG emissions by local authorities for 2019. This dataset contains the emissions for each Local Authority in Ireland broken down on a 1 x 1 km scale. The GHGs included in the local authority MapElre dataset are CH₄, CO₂, N₂O and SF₆.

Electricity Consumption Data from the Central Statistics Office was also used to quantify emissions for the Residential, Manufacturing and Commercial Sectors.

The GHG emissions for County Donegal in 2019 totalled 1,970 ktCO₂e, approximately 3% of the national total



A breakdown across the various sectors is shown below and in Figure 2.4.

Emissions Category	County Donegal Emissions (ktCO ₂ e)	National Emissions (ktCO ₂ e)
Agriculture	767 (39%)	22,134 (34%)
Commercial services	123 (6%)	4,618 (7%)
Industrial Processes	22 (1%)	2,267 (3%)
LULUCF	287 (15%)	6,657 (10%)
Manufacturing	59 (3%)	6,737 (10%)
Residential	419 (21%)	9,552 (15%)
Transport	255 (13%)	12,196 (19%)
Waste	37 (2%)	991 (2%)
TOTAL	1,970 (100%)	65,152 (100%)

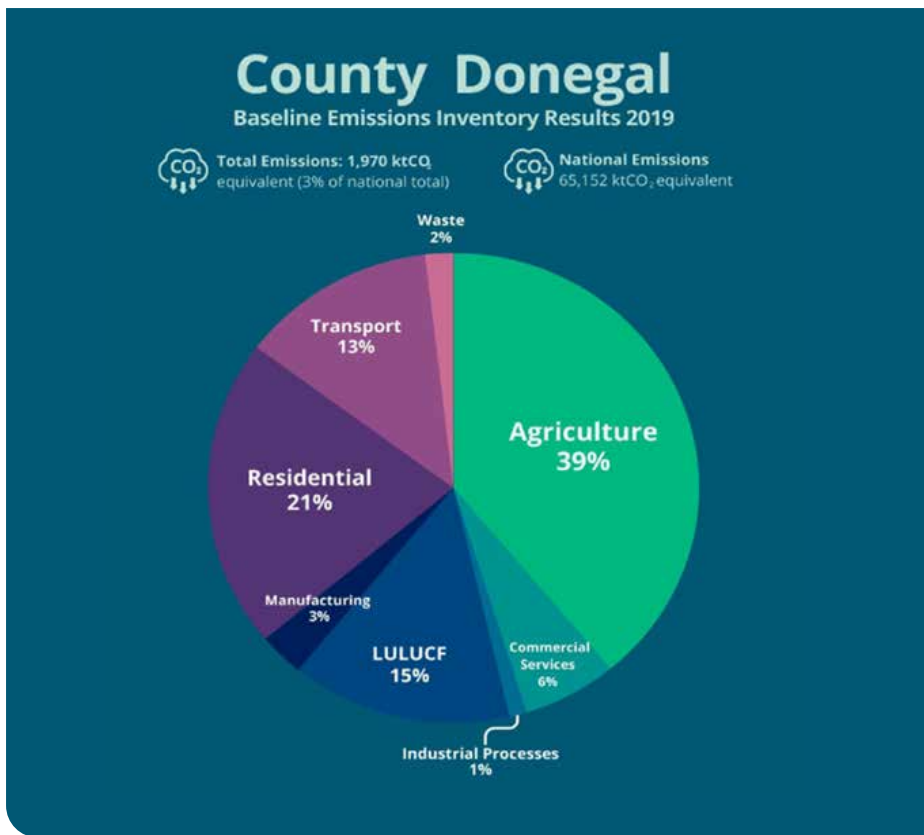
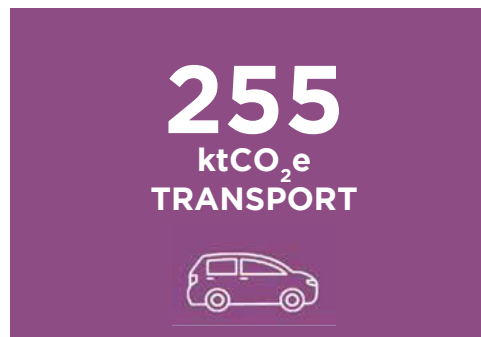


Figure 2.4
Baseline Emissions Inventory Results 2019 - Donegal

2.5.2 Donegal County Council's Baselines Emissions Inventory

Donegal County Council is responsible for the energy use and GHG emissions associated with its buildings and facilities, public lighting, and also from the Council's vehicle fleet.

All public bodies in Ireland must achieve a 51% reduction in energy related GHG emissions and a 50% improvement in energy efficiency by 2030. This is tracked through the SEAI's Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) system.

At a national level, the public sector is 34% more energy efficient than in 2009 and exceeded its 33% energy efficiency target for 2020 .

2.5.2.1 Energy Consumption

Donegal County Council's energy consumption (kWh) has reduced by 67% since 2015 within Public Service Centres and County House.

Various projects aimed at reducing energy consumption and emissions are either already in place or planned since 2020 including LED lighting upgrades, solar panel installation, cavity insulation, heating and thermal glazing upgrades.

At present, public lighting accounts for 68% of all electricity usage in Donegal County Council.

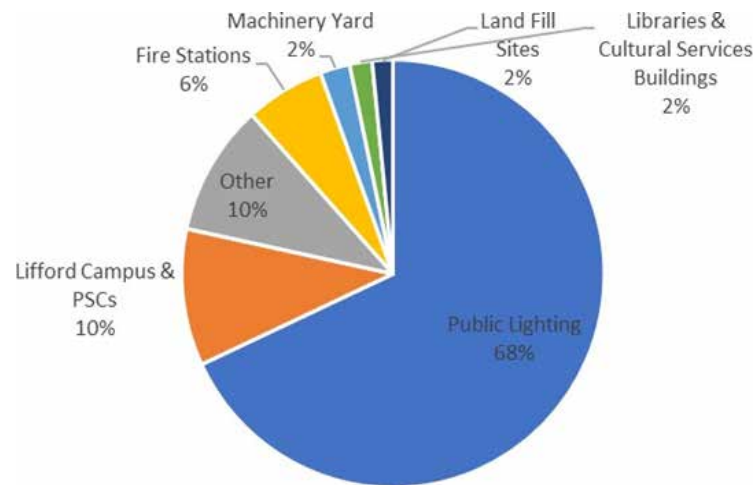


Figure 2.5
Electricity Usage in Donegal County Council.



2.5.2.2 GHG Emissions

Donegal County Council's overall GHG emissions are categorised into Transport, Electricity Usage and Heating as shown below.

The total emissions from Donegal County Council (DCC) are 10,668 ktCO₂e. This represents less than 1% of the total emissions for the County as a whole.

Electricity emissions come entirely from imports, the largest fuel source for heating is heating oils, and the largest fuel source for the DCC Transport fleet is road diesel.

Donegal County Council has already made considerable progress in reducing the emissions from its own operations since 2015, with an annual update provided through the SEAI Monitoring and Reporting system.

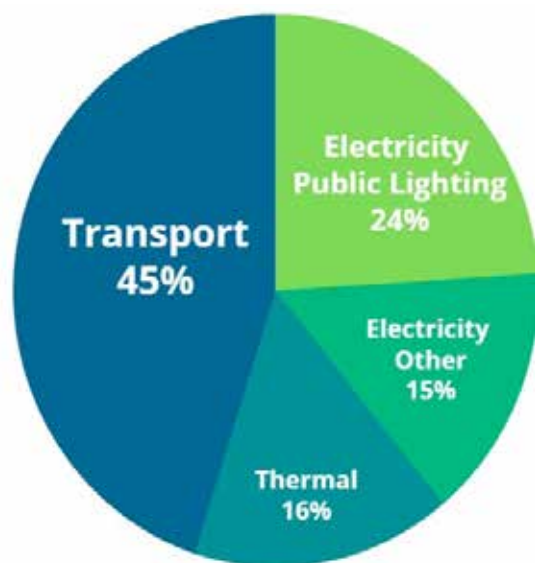


Figure 2.6
Donegal County Council's GHG Emissions

Full details of the Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) and the Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI) accompany this Plan.

Energy	Energy Category	Energy Type	kgCO ₂ e	
Electricity	Electricity		4,135,701	
			4,135,701	
		Net Electricity Imports (MPRN data)	4,135,701	
		Net Electricity Imports (non-MPRN data)	0	
		Onsite Generation by Non-Fuel Renewables or Landfill Gas	0	
		Offsite Charging of Electric Vehicles	0	
Heating	Heating Oils		1,696,748	
			1,641,969	
		Kerosene	1,025,562	
		Gasoil	616,407	
		Gas		54,779
			LPG (purchased by volume)	52,669
			LPG (purchased by weight)	2,111
			Wood fuels and solid biomass	0
			Woodchips (35% moisture)	0
			District Heating	0
Transport	Transport Fuels (Mineral Oil Fuels)		4,835,772	
			2,195,182	
		Petrol (excl. blended bioethanol)	10,540	
		Road Diesel (DERV) (excl. blended biodiesel)	1,875,343	
		Marked diesel (non-thermal)	309,296	
		Transport Biofuels		0
			Biodiesel (incl. all blended biodiesel)	0
			Bioethanol (incl. all blended bioethanol)	0
		Other Transport Fuels		2,640,589
			Marked diesel provided by Plant Hire Contractors	2,640,589
Total CO₂ Emissions			10,668,220	







Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall

GNÍOMHÚ AR SON NA HAERÁIDE

CLIMATE ACTION

Donegal County Council

3

CLIMATE ACTIONS

CLIMATE ACTIONS

3.1 Development of Climate Actions

The development of climate actions in this LACAP has been completed with due regard and cognisance of the national Climate Action Plan 2023 and National Adaptation Framework. Due consideration to the sectoral emissions ceilings and budgets that help to shape and inform government policy on climate action over the next five years has also been given.

The actions of this LACAP are aligned with the strategic goals of the sectoral strategy published in April 2021 by local government “Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030”, DECA). DECA sets out the overarching commitment on climate action leadership to ensure a coherent approach to climate action across the administrative and political structures of all 31 local authorities. The strategic goals of DECA 2023 are:

- Foster governance, leadership and partnerships for climate action
- Achieve our carbon emission and energy efficiency targets for 2030 and 2050
- Deliver on climate adaptation and climate resilience
- Mobilise climate action in local communities
- Mobilise climate action in enterprise and support transition to an inclusive, net zero and circular economy
- Achieve a ‘just transition’ particularly for communities that may be economically disadvantaged by decarbonising projects

The Government’s National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2022-2024 acknowledges that local government “has a crucial role to play in translating national policies into tangible practical actions that can help to concretise the SDG objectives into our individual and communities’ behaviours and goals”. Its Strategic Objective No. 2 is to integrate the SDGs into Local Authority work to better support the localisation of the SDGs.

Donegal County Development Plan 2024-2030 (in draft at time of Print) sets out the strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County over the plan period from 2022 to 2028. The plan aims to combat climate change and its impacts in the County by promoting and supporting policies and objectives which contribute towards a transition to a low-carbon and climate resilient future, and which focus on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and energy demands through appropriate and effective climate mitigation and adaptation measures.

3.2 Framework of Climate Actions

Based on the evidence gathered, a policy framework for this LACAP has been developed in line with Government guidance. This hierarchy ensures that the actions we set on the ground are aligned with the high-level vision that we aspire to.



Figure 3.1: Framework of Climate Actions

While the Climate Action Plan is ambitious to reflect the leadership role of Donegal County Council on climate action, it does not include actions whereby their implementation and achievement fall outside our role, remit, and governance.

3.3 Our Vision and Plan Mission

The wider international, European, national and local policy position on climate action is outlined in Chapter 1 of this LACAP. Coupled with this policy direction, the scientific evidence base from the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report 2022 notes that it is unequivocal that climate change has already disrupted human and natural systems. The need for climate action is urgent to avoid missing a rapidly closing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all citizens.

To this end, the Council’s vision for this LACAP is for cooperation and ambition between the Council and all citizens of Donegal to do their part in taking urgent climate action to ensure a sustainable future for all within the County.

In addition, the interdependence of climate, biodiversity and human societies are well established through observed trends such as biodiversity loss, overall unsustainable consumption of natural resources, land and ecosystem degradation, human demographic shifts and social and economic inequalities. Taking appropriate climate action will have co-benefits for biodiversity, human health and well-being and the economy - these co-benefits are also addressed within the Plan vision.

The Vision for our LACAP recognises Donegal County Council's pivotal position to deliver on national policy at community level, while understanding that climate actions and impacts from climate change will not be the same for all sectors.

Our Vision defines where we would like to lead the County, our Mission Statement takes an action-oriented focus, speaking to the grounded purpose of Donegal County Council in delivering and mainstreaming effective climate action across our own services and functions.

Our Vision is:

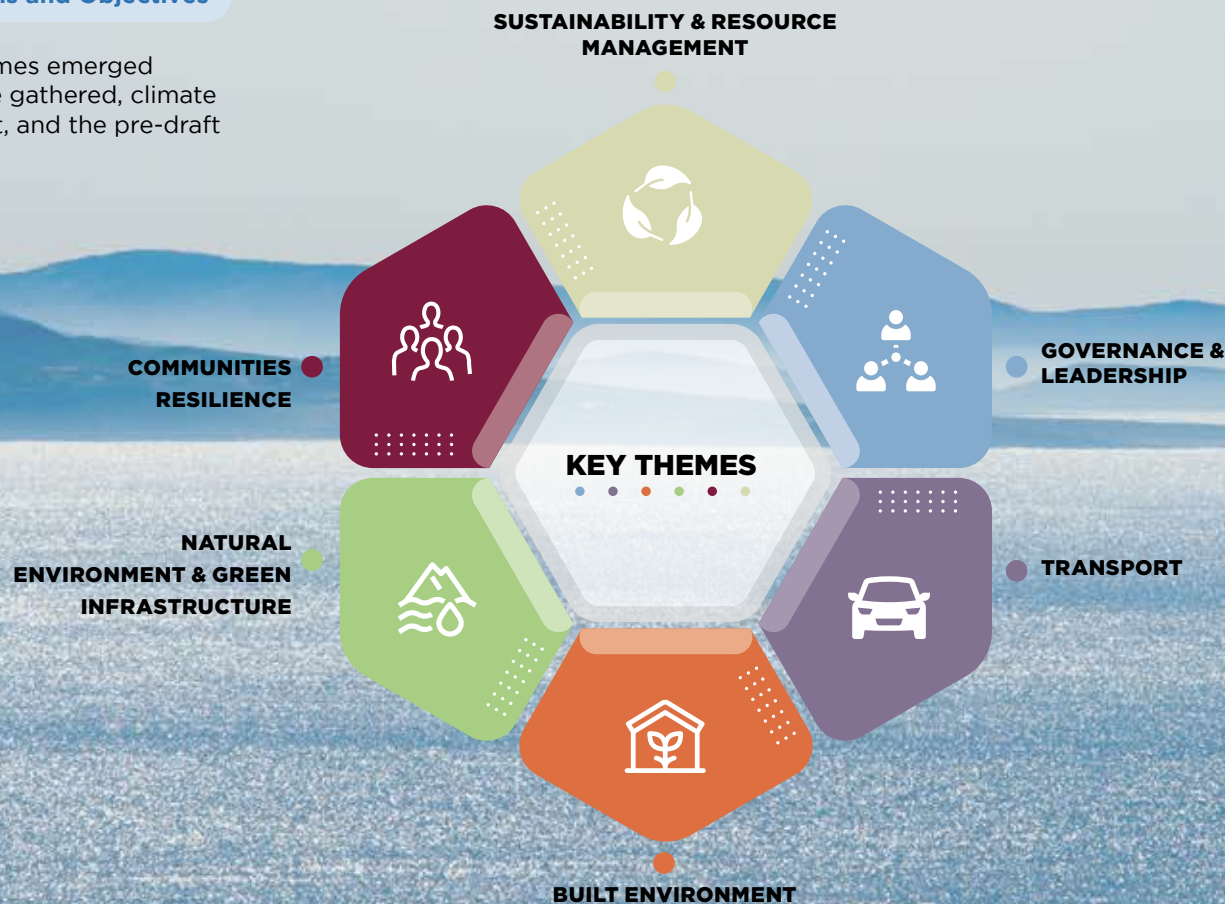
To be a Climate Resilient, Biodiversity Rich, Environmentally Sustainable and Carbon Neutral Donegal by no later than the end of 2050 level.

Our Mission Statement is:

To deliver transformative change and measurable climate action across Donegal County Council within our own organisation and services, through leadership, example and mobilising action at a local level.

3.4 Our Strategic Goals and Objectives

In Donegal, six key themes emerged from the evidence base gathered, climate change risk assessment, and the pre-draft consultation process.



Based on these themes the strategic goals and objectives of this Plan are as follows.

1. Governance and Leadership

The Council will show leadership and ambition by mainstreaming climate action in the planning and delivery of all Council services and by supporting and partnering with the community in delivering climate action within the County.

- Deliver the appropriate climate response on all Council owned assets to align with a trajectory to net zero emissions.
- Ensure that the Council and its staff are suitably structured and resourced to deliver and monitor the actions in this plan.
- Collaborate with the community, business and other stakeholders within the County and with neighbouring authorities to align on successful climate actions.
- Align the actions for climate, energy, water and biodiversity within Council work programmes to maximise impact and efficiency.

2. Transport

Increase active travel, modal shift and reduce vehicle emissions

- Reduce the vehicle emissions of the Council fleet
- Promote and deliver active travel policies and projects within the County to facilitate greater walking and cycling.
- Support the delivery of rail connectivity and the enhancement of other public transport options to encourage modal shift from private car transport.
- Enable the development of a network of electric vehicle charging points.

3. Built Environment

Increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout all buildings and infrastructure.

- Reduce energy and electricity use at all municipal buildings, facilities and infrastructure (including lighting).
- Retrofit buildings as required to increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions.
- Ensure all new buildings in the County are designed and constructed in line with best energy efficient standards.
- Support the delivery of renewable electricity generation and transmission infrastructure within the County.
- Ensure that all Council owned buildings, facilities and infrastructure are resilient to the effects of climate change.
- Increase the resilience of our Built Heritage to climate change.
- Support the Office of Public Works in providing resilience to the effects of flooding now and in the future.

4. Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure

Promote and protect our environment, and its biodiversity and water catchments as key enablers of climate adaptation and mitigation across the County.

- Protect, conserve and enhance County Donegal's biodiversity and heritage.
- Comply with the Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan.
- Increase coastal resilience to the changing climate and support nature based solutions to avoid coastal squeeze and make space for nature.
- Support nature-based solutions to mitigate against and adapt to climate change, and to provide further benefits such as biodiversity conservation, water security and human well-being.

5. Communities Resilience

Build capacity and readiness within the community to motivate demand for transformative climate action.

- Engage with all parts of the community to build capacity and readiness to effect transformative climate action and achieve a just transition.
- Increase climate literacy across the community through education and raising awareness on climate action and nature based solutions that provide co-benefits for human health, water and wildlife.
- Continue to support arts and heritage within the County as a tool to support education and awareness on climate action.
- Ensure that all Council funding mechanisms are underpinned by strong carbon proofing requirements.

6. Sustainability and Resource Management (Circular Economy)

Support sustainable and circular initiatives and infrastructure within the County.

- Ensure that sustainable resource use is embedded in all Council operations and is a key determinant in all future Council procurement.
- Support businesses in accelerating climate action and sustainable practices.
- Support the transition to a circular economy within the County.
- Support farmers in the shift toward low-carbon and climate-resilient agricultural practices



3.5 Environmental Governance

Environmental governance plays a pivotal role in safeguarding our ecosystems and natural resources. Donegal County Council ensures that its policies, regulations, and decisions regarding the environment are made with sustainability in mind, balancing its communities needs with the protection of the environment.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) processes are important mechanisms to ensure that environmental protection and nature conservation management considerations are integrated into the development and implementation of the LACAP.

DCC will ensure compliance with the Donegal County Development Plan 2018-2024 and superseding plans, local area plan objectives and policies relating to environmental management, the protection of statutory Conservation Areas and ensure compliance with specific environmental management measures relating to this plan.

DCC will take account of any relevant recommendations in the EPA State of Our Environment Report 2024, once published, in implementing the LACAP over its lifetime.

Donegal County Council will consider any relevant updated actions, measures or recommendations that may arise in updates to the National Climate Action Plan over the lifetime of the LACAP.

EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive

The Local Authority Climate Action Plan is subject to compliance with the SEA Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. SEA is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation of plans and programmes developed by public authorities, prior to their adoption. SEA is the formal and systematic evaluation of the likely significant effects of implementing any plan or programme on the environment.

The European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004), as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011, gives effect to the transposition of the SEA Directive into Irish law.

For the purposes of compliance with the SEA Directive, each local authority as the 'competent authority' is required to carry out an environmental assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the climate action plan in accordance with the provisions of the above-mentioned regulations. The SEA Environmental Report accompanies this Plan.

EU Habitats Directive-Appropriate Assessment

The Local Authority Climate Action Plan is also subject to Appropriate Assessment under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC) to determine if its implementation is likely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites. Local authorities, as the prescribed 'competent authorities', may only adopt the plan after having ascertained that it will not have a significant impact on the integrity of a Natura 2000 site on its own, or in combination with other plans or projects.

The directive provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance through the establishment of the Natura 2000 network. The Natura 2000 network includes sites designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the EU Birds Directive (Directive 79/409/EEC, amended by Directive 2009/147/EC). The Natura Impact Statement (NIS) accompanies this Plan.

Land use plans and projects arising from this Climate Action Plan will be underpinned by Strategic Environmental Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment, Appropriate Assessment, and Ecological Impact Assessments as relevant.

3.6 Our Role as Donegal County Council

While the draft Climate Action Plan is ambitious to reflect the leadership role of Donegal County Council on climate action, it does not include actions whereby their implementation and achievement fall outside our role, remit, and governance.

Donegal County Council will use this LACAP in planning how it will reduce greenhouse gas emissions and increase energy efficiency across its own assets and infrastructure, whilst also taking on a broader role to influence, facilitate and co-ordinate the climate actions of communities and other stakeholders and actions to advocate for climate action in Donegal. To this end, each Action in the LACAP is categorised into one of four “Council Role” categories:

- **Full accountability:** Targeted actions for areas where Donegal County Council has full accountability for climate action within their own operations.
- **Influence:** Actions for where Donegal County Council can influence businesses, communities, and individuals in the delivery of local climate action through the functions and services they provide.
- **Coordination:** Actions for where Donegal County Council can coordinate and facilitate local and community action bringing together stakeholders in partnership to achieve climate action related projects.
- **Advocate:** Actions aligned to Donegal County Council role as advocate on climate action through raising awareness, communicating, informing, and engaging in open dialogue on the topic.





GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Key to this element of implementation is ensuring Donegal County Council has clear governance and organisational commitment to the plan and its delivery. This process has already commenced with the establishment of a climate action team consisting of a Climate Action Co-ordinator, Climate Action Officer and Community Climate Action Officer.

As part of this plan-making process all internal Directorates were consulted and have ownership of their actions; the Senior Management Team (SMT) are actively engaged in the plan-making process while Elected Members (EM) and the Climate Action & Environment Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) are kept informed at all stages.

Building on this commitment, further actions are included within the LACAP to integrate governance; leadership and accountability in climate action at all levels across the Council. Actions are also included to support collaborations with other stakeholders from all sectors and the wider community with Donegal County Council playing a broader role in facilitating, co-ordinating and advocating for climate action.



GOAL	The Council will show leadership and ambition by mainstreaming climate action in the planning and delivery of all Council services and by supporting and partnering with the community in delivering climate action within the County.
OBJECTIVES	<ul style="list-style-type: none">GL1 Deliver the appropriate climate response on all Council owned assets to align with a trajectory to net zero emissions.GL2 Ensure that the Council and its staff are suitably structured and resourced to deliver and monitor the actions in this plan.GL3 Collaborate with the community, business and other stakeholders within the County and with neighbouring authorities to align on successful climate actions.GL4 Align the actions for climate, energy, water and biodiversity within Council work programmes to maximise impact and efficiency.



GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

Strategic Goal 1: The Council will show leadership and ambition by mainstreaming climate action in the planning and delivery of all Council services and by supporting and partnering with the community in delivering climate action within the County.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	DCC Lead Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
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GL1 - Deliver the appropriate climate response on all Council owned assets to align with a trajectory to net zero emissions.

GL 1.1	Reduce Donegal County Council's own carbon emissions by 51% by 2030, compared with a baseline of 2018.	Mitigation	Percentage (%) emission reduction.	Year 5	All	DECC; CARO.	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources
GL 1.2	Improve Donegal County Council's own energy efficiency by 50% by 2030 compared with a baseline of 2009.	Mitigation	Percentage (%) energy efficiency improvement.	Year 5	All	DECC; CARO.	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources
GL 1.3	Implement a monitoring regime and revise as needed to tackle emerging climate action priorities in a transparent decision making process.	Both	Implementation of monitoring regime; Annual SEAI monitoring and reporting (M&R) delivery.	Year 1-5	Climate Action Team; Energy Management Team	All DCC departments	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources
GL 1.4	Develop a methodology for reporting on Climate Action at SPC, MD and Plenary meetings.	Both	Methodology Prepared and Implemented	Year 1	Climate Action Team	-	Fully Accountable	-
GL 1.5	Implement Green Public Procurement on Council projects.	Both	Implement Green Public Procurement (GPP); GPP Audit of Projects	Year 1-5	Finance	All DCC Departments; Office of Government Procurement	Fully Accountable	Funding Project availability
GL 1.6	Develop a Climate Action Checklist for all DCC Climate Actions and Monitor Progress on Implementation.	Both	Checklist Prepared Monitoring and Reporting Underway	Year 1 Year 1-4	Climate Action Team	All DCC Departments; CARO; DECC.	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources

Strategic Goal 1: The Council will show leadership and ambition by mainstreaming climate action in the planning and delivery of all Council services and by supporting and partnering with the community in delivering climate action within the County.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	DCC Lead Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
GL 1.7	Participate in the EU Project Own Your Own SECAP to gain support / assistance in developing our Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP) and highlighting measures that have positive effects on climate mitigation, adaptation and energy poverty.	Both	Project Reporting; SECAP prepared	Year 2 Year 5	NW Regional Energy Agency	Tipperary Energy Agency	Coordinate and Facilitate	EU Funding

GL2 - Ensure that the Council and its staff are suitably structured and resourced to deliver and monitor the actions in this plan.

GL 2.1	Promote Climate Action as a stand alone agenda item at relevant meetings.	Both	Climate Action on relevant meeting agendas	Year 1	Climate Action Team	All DCC Departments	Fully Accountable	N/A
GL2.2	Implement Climate Action engagement programme in the workplace for all staff and elected members.	Both	Implementation of climate engagement programme; Number of staff participants.	Year 1	Corporate	All DCC Departments	Fully Accountable	N/A
GL2.3	Implement the organisational structures required within the Council to ensure delivery of this plan and maintain the appropriate climate action policy and culture throughout.	Both	Climate Action Team in place; Climate Action Monitoring Committee in place.	Year 1	Corporate and Environment	All DCC Departments	Fully Accountable	N/A
GL2.4	Liaise with national organisations to devise and deliver accredited training for local authority staff on biodiversity	Both	No. of training courses held; Number of staff trained.	Year 3	Corporate and Cultural Services	CARO	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources
GL2.5	Appoint a 'Climate Champion' for each department within the Council to act as an interface between each section and the climate team.	Both	No. of Climate Champions appointed.	Year 1	Corporate and Environment	All DCC Departments	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources

Strategic Goal 1: The Council will show leadership and ambition by mainstreaming climate action in the planning and delivery of all Council services and by supporting and partnering with the community in delivering climate action within the County.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	DCC Lead Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
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GL3- Collaborate with the community, business and other stakeholders within the County and with neighbouring authorities to align on successful climate actions.

GL3.1	Continue cross-border collaboration and partnership with Derry City and Strabane District Council in achieving collective ambition on climate action by working to deliver the North West Climate Action Framework.	Both	No. of cross-border projects.	Annual	SMT		Fully Accountable	
GL 3.2	Complete the establishment of North West Regional Energy Office as a vehicle for delivering on DCC's commitment to work alongside Derry City and Strabane District Council, as detailed within the North-West Regional Energy Strategy.	Mitigation	NW Regional Energy Agency established.	Year 1	Environment	Derry City and Strabane District Council	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources
GL3.3	Work with our partners on the Local Development Strategy 2023-2027 to fund and deliver a range of Climate Change training and projects with the community.	Both	Delivery of 40 projects across the county focused on the Green Economy, capacity building and climate change and adaptation.	Year 3 to 7	Community Development and Planning	LCDC, DLDC, Udaras, IDP, Comhar na nOileán	Influence	Development of projects by the partners at local level
GL 3.4	Partner with the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI) to provide bridging loans to Sustainable Energy Communities so that they can avail of SEAI Grants for preparing Energy Master Plans.	Mitigation	No.of SECs availing of bridging finance to prepare Energy Master Plans.	Year 1 - 3	Climate Action Team	SEAI, ATU	Coordinate and Facilitate	SECs making applications SEC Mentor Support
GL 3.5	Raise awareness of external funding opportunities to implement climate actions and contribute to achieving overall goals of this plan.	Both	No. of funding projects secured.	Year 1-5	Economic Development	Funding Organisations	Coordinate and Facilitate	Funding availability Project suitability

Strategic Goal 1: The Council will show leadership and ambition by mainstreaming climate action in the planning and delivery of all Council services and by supporting and partnering with the community in delivering climate action within the County.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	DCC Lead Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
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GL4 - Align the actions for climate, energy, water and biodiversity within Council work programmes to maximise impact and efficiency.

GL4.1	Promote the National Framework Group Water Scheme (GWS) Policy on Climate Action	Adaptation	Number of GWS engaged with.	Year 5	Environment		Influence	Resources
GL4.2	Ensure climate action relating to heritage and biodiversity is included in staff induction training for indoor and outdoor staff and elected representatives.	Both	Training materials produced and delivered to new staff.	Annual	Corporate and Cultural Services		Fully Accountable	Resources
GL4.3	Utilise the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP) as a catalyst for Climate Change in Donegal by providing strategic support for climate adaptation and mitigation projects	Both	Development of Climate Change oriented High Level Goals.	2024 to 2029	Community Development	LCDC, DLDC, Udaras, IDP, Comhar na nOileán	Influence	Final sign off by the LCDC and Economic, Enterprise and Emergency Services SPC
GL4.4	Review Donegal County Council's Flood Emergency Response Plan and Major Emergency Plan on a regular basis to reflect the increase in climate change related risks including flooding.	Adaptation	Flood Emergency Response Plan reviewed twice in 5 years; Major Emergency Plan reviewed annually.	Year 1 - 5	Emergency Services	Donegal County Council Severe Weather Assessment Team; All Council Services	Fully Accountable	Review of National Framework for Emergency Management



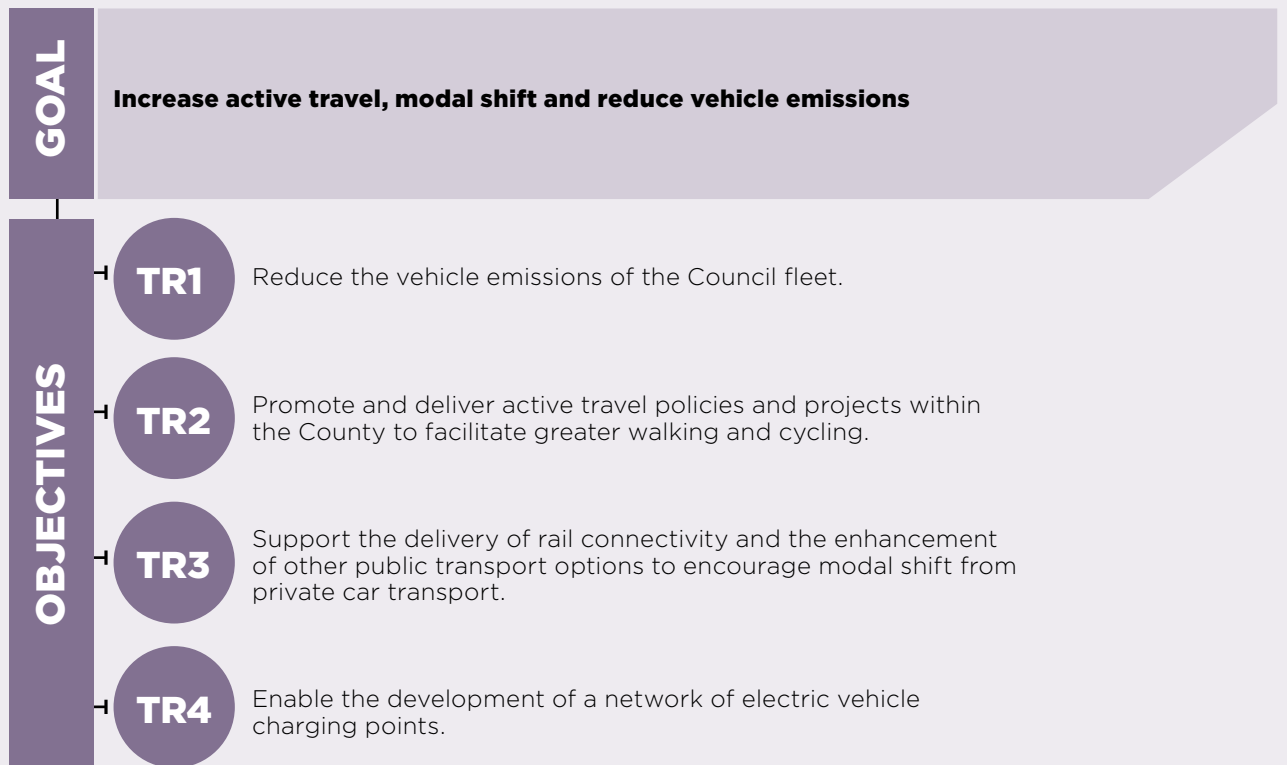
TRANSPORT

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Transportation has an important role to play in our approach to climate change, as it contributes to a significant amount of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. How we choose to travel for work, education and leisure has a big impact on GHG emissions. This presents numerous opportunities for positive change.

Donegal County Council's goal is to increase active travel, modal shift and reduce vehicle emissions. The Council supports the Avoid-Shift-Improve model through its own (draft) County Development Plan Policies and Objectives. Actions in this LACAP further support this approach. We will support the delivery of rail connectivity and the enhancement of other public transport options to encourage modal shift from private car transport. Whilst the Council will work towards reducing GHG emissions of its own vehicle fleet, we will also support the wider shift to Electric Vehicle (EV) use by developing an EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy.

Active Travel means using your own energy to get where you're going. It includes walking, scooting, running and cycling. It includes all types of trips, with an emphasis on trips under 5km. Active Travel considers the needs of those who use prams, scooters, wheelchairs, and adapted cycles, as well as new ways of getting around such as electric scooters and bikes. Donegal County Council is working to increase the number of people choosing Active Travel for everyday short journeys, or as part of longer journeys by public transport and will increase the provision of walking and cycling infrastructure, thus promoting and enabling a modal shift to active travel and more sustainable modes of transport.





TRANSPORT

Strategic Goal 2: Increase active travel, modal shift and reduce vehicle emissions								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies

TR1 - Reduce the vehicle emissions of the Council fleet

TR1.1	Reduce the emission levels of Council's owned and hired transport fleet to meet the required reduction of 50% of the 2018 baseline.	Mitigation	% reduction of transport emissions; Vehicle Fleet Decarbonisation Plan Prepared; Vehicle Fleet Decarbonisation Plan being implemented.	Year 7 (2030) Year 1 (2024) Year 5 (2028)	Roads & Transportation	SMT, DCC Finance Section; Environment and Housing Directorates; Department of Transport	Fully Accountable	
TR 1.2	Roll out 'Eco Driver Training' to Plant Operators within the Council.	Mitigation	Reduction in vehicle fleet fuel consumption compared with 2019.	Year 1 - 5	Roads and Transportation	Various departments within the Council; CARO	Fully Accountable	

TR2 - Promote and deliver active travel policies and projects within the County to facilitate greater walking and cycling.

TR2.1	Support the establishment of a comprehensive and integrated network of remote working hubs throughout the County to support remote working and reduce commuter travel in line with the National Remote Work Strategy.	Mitigation	No. of remote working hubs delivered or planned.	Year 5	Community Development and Economic Development		Influence	Funding
TR2.2	Implement Blended Working Policy for Council staff in accordance with Government guidance.	Mitigation	Blended Working Policy Implemented, No. of staff members availing of the policy; Reduction in miles travelled to work by participants compared to 2019.	Year 1 Year 1 - 5 Year 1 - 5	Corporate		Fully Accountable	

Strategic Goal 2: Increase active travel, modal shift and reduce vehicle emissions								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
TR2.3	Deliver and maintain multiple Active Travel projects in the County.	Mitigation	No. of Active Travel projects completed each year.	Year 1 - 5	Roads & Transportation	Department of Transport	Fully Accountable	Budget and Resources
TR2.4	Design a network of segregated, attractive and safe Active Travel paths as part of the TEN-T Public Road Improvement Project (Donegal) to encourage a greater uptake of walking and cycling.	Mitigation	Completed Active Travel Design ready for Statutory Process publication.	Year 1	Roads & Transportation	Donegal TEN-T (www.donegal-ten-t.ie)	Fully Accountable	Government Funding of Project Expertise availability
TR2.5	Expand the greenway network in the County establishing linkages with towns and villages in line with the strategic national cycle network.	Mitigation	Total km of cycleway constructed.	Year 5	Roads & Transportation		Fully Accountable	Funding
TR 2.6	Focus on increasing safe modes of transport in Letterkenny Town to provide practical alternatives to car use for short journeys including design and development of future road infrastructure projects e.g. the Letterkenny Southern Network Project.	Mitigation	Total km of cycleway; Total km of walkways; No. of NTA Town Bus Routes; Annual report on progress and monitoring of Annual Average Daily Traffic / Pedestrian and Cycle counts; Inclusion of safe modes of transport and Active Travel within Letterkenny Southern Network Project.	Year 1 - 5	Roads & Transportation	Department of Transport; All DCC Departments; NTA (Active Travel team and Bus Connects).	Influence	Funding
TR 2.7	Support and advocate for change in travel behaviour amongst communities through public engagement and community liaison activities.		Active Travel Liaison Officer appointed.	Year 1	Roads & Transportation	Department of Transport; All DCC Departments; NTA (Active Travel team and Bus Connects).	Advocate	Funding and Resources

Strategic Goal 2: Increase active travel, modal shift and reduce vehicle emissions								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies

TR3 - Support the delivery of rail connectivity and the enhancement of other public transport options to encourage modal shift from private car transport.

TR3.1	Advocate for the provision of a rail link between: a) Letterkenny and Derry; and b) Letterkenny and Sligo.	Adaptation	No. of engagements in relation to rail links.	Year 5	Roads & Transportation		Advocate	Delivery of 'All-Ireland' rail strategy
TR3.2	Support the delivery of enhanced public transport services within the County including a centrally-located transport hub in Letterkenny to serve the region and the extension of the national rail network to Letterkenny.	Mitigation	No. of new and expanded public transport services; No. of public transport passengers.	Year 5	Roads & Transportation	Irish Rail; Bus Éireann; Private Bus Operators; National Transport Authority.	Advocate	Irish Rail Feasibility Study on Rail Extension. Investment by private and public bus companies.
TR3.3	Support the National Sustainable Mobility Policy to increase provision of park and ride/share at transport interchanges and community hubs and support the development of Town Bus Services to maximise connectivity for the highest number of residents.	Mitigation	No. of Park and Ride Schemes Delivered.	Year 1 - 5	Roads & Transportation	NTA (Active Travel team and Bus Connects); Department of Transport.	Advocate	Funding
TR3.4	Support the delivery of enhanced public transport and transport infrastructure in rural areas by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> supporting delivery of the Donegal rural public transport routes in the national Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan (Phase 2 Implementation) and advocating for the inclusion of additional routes in Donegal under subsequent phases. 	Mitigation	Engagement with NTA.	Ongoing	Roads & Transportation	National Transport Authority (NTA).	Advocate	Funding
TR3.5	Support the design of a network of Modal Hubs within the TEN-T Public Road Improvement Project for seamless and convenient transition between Active Travel, Public Transport and Private Vehicle, and to encourage Modal Shift.	Mitigation	Complete Modal Hub Design, ready for Statutory Process publication.	Year 2	Roads & Transportation	Donegal TEN-T (www.donegal-ten-t.ie)	Fully Accountable	Government Funding of Project Expertise availability

Strategic Goal 2: Increase active travel, modal shift and reduce vehicle emissions								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies

TR4- Enable the development of a network of electric vehicle charging points.

TR 4.1	Develop an EV charging infrastructure strategy for County Donegal In line with ZEVl guidance.	Mitigation	Strategy prepared; Measures being progressed.	Year 2 Year 5	Roads & Transportation	Planning	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources
TR4.2	Support the design of a network of strategically placed EV charging points along the proposed TEN-T Public Road Improvement Project to encourage greater uptake of EV private vehicles and satisfy the requirements of EU Alternative Fuel Infrastructure Regulation.	Mitigation	Complete EV Network Design ready for Statutory Process publication.	Year 1	Roads & Transportation	Donegal TEN-T (www.donegal-ten-t.ie)	Fully Accountable	Government Funding of Project Expertise availability



BUILT ENVIRONMENT

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

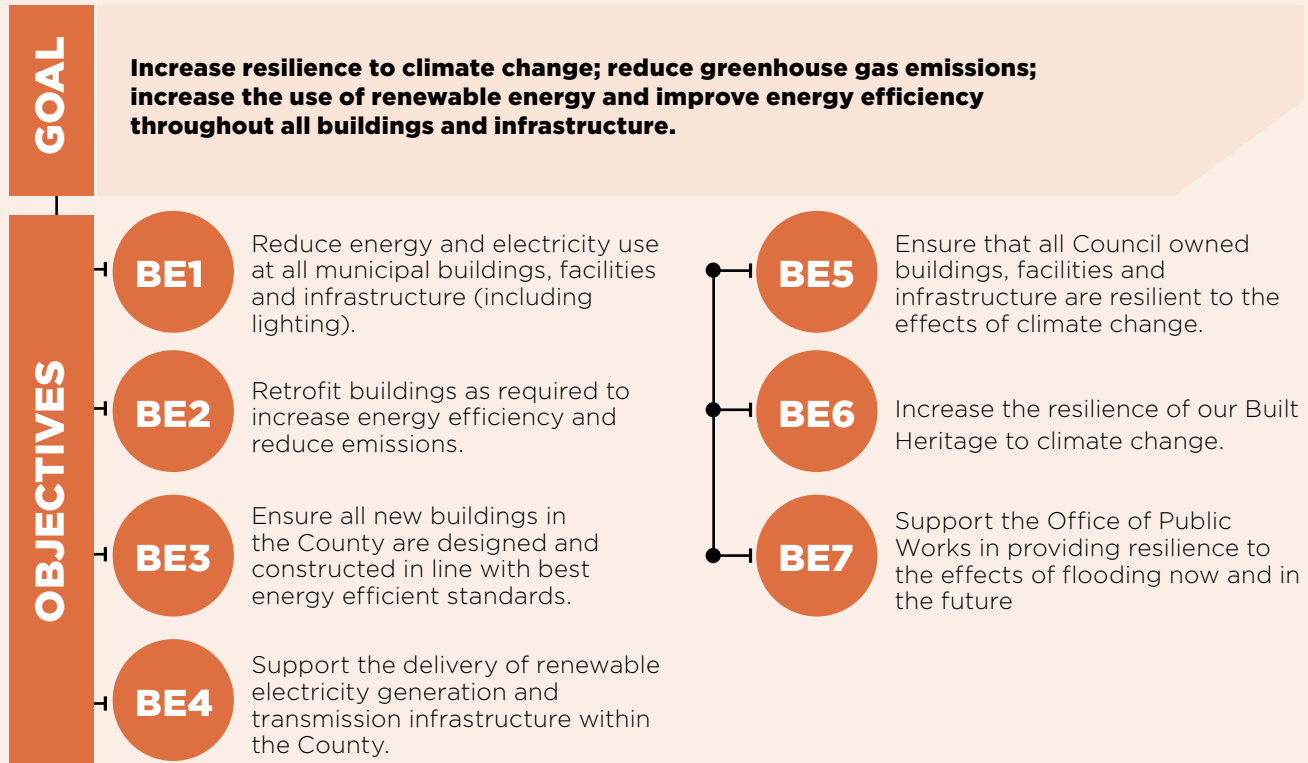
Ireland has set ambitious targets for a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 (relative to 2018 levels) and net-zero emissions no later than 2050. In meeting these national targets, strategic pathways under the theme of Built Environment include reductions in CO₂ emissions from electricity generation, improvements in residential building energy efficiencies and the way we heat our homes. All sectors of society will play a role in this.

The Council aims to show leadership in working to meet its own 2030 targets, and to influence emissions reductions in the wider community in line with the national climate objective. The Council's goal is to increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout buildings and infrastructure, including public lighting.

Donegal County Council has an energy management system (EnMS) in place to effectively manage energy used by the Council. Since 2020, the Council's Energy Management Team has been undertaking Energy Reduction Projects within Public Buildings including LED lighting and heating upgrades, installation of Solar PV panels and improved cavity insulation. DCC's Roads and Transportation team have also been delivering the Public Lighting and LED Retrofit and Energy Reduction Programme. The energy management system in Donegal County Council has been implemented and certified according to an international standard (ISO 50001) and is checked on a regular basis by a certified third party body to determine the energy performance improvement.

The Council is working to improve the energy efficiency of its building stock including through Energy Efficiency and Fabric Upgrade Programmes for existing social homes to achieve Building Energy Ratings (BER) of B2 equivalent by 2030. Improving resilience of the built environment against the effects of climate change will be progressed through our ongoing collaboration with the Office of Public Works in relation to flood risk management and by supporting regional and national initiatives to improve climate change resilience of our infrastructure and built heritage.

There are many additional benefits to improving the energy performance of our built environment and reducing GHGs. These include the growth of renewable energies increasing our energy independence and wealth retention as a nation, while improvements in residential heating and insulation will result in better quality, healthier and more comfortable homes and play a part in Just Transition for all.





BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Strategic Goal 3: Increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout all buildings and infrastructure.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
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BE1- Reduce energy and electricity use at all municipal buildings, facilities and infrastructure (including lighting).

BE1.1	Deliver actions relating to energy management in all council divisions as per Energy Management Team Opportunities Register.	Mitigation	Measures implemented on the Opportunities Register.	Year 1 -5	Energy Management Team	All DCC Services	Fully Accountable	
BE1.2	Deliver the ongoing public lighting LED Retrofit and Energy Reduction Programme, while having due regard to impact of light used on biodiversity.	Mitigation	100% lights in the DCC public lighting inventory retrofitted to LED 40% lights with DIMMING implemented (level of lighting reduced between 00.00hrs and 06.00hrs)	Year 5	Roads and Transportation - Central Technical Services	Project Lead - Mayo County Council; RMO; DCC Finance Section; Elected Members.	Fully Accountable	Award of Roads Management Office (RMO) Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project (PLEEP) Contract Funding, Approval of DCC Public Lighting Policy (at CPG/Plenary Council) to facilitate DIMMING
BE1.3	Support ongoing DCC project to consolidate our Corporate ICT switching, storage and computing infrastructure.	Mitigation	Measured reduction in ICT power consumption by DCC.	Year 1	Information Systems		Fully Accountable	

Strategic Goal 3: Increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout all buildings and infrastructure.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
BE1.4	Reduce CO ₂ emissions in all four DCC Leisure Centres via Energy Efficiency Projects to deliver more sustainable and climate friendly facilities.	Mitigation	Establishment of Baseline data; Number of Audits Complete; Monitoring Programme Established; Reporting on interventions made - comparison with baseline data.	Year 5	Environment	Boards of Management; Local Communities & Clubs.	Fully Accountable	Departmental Funding, Operators and Consultant Expertise
BE1.5	Implement the Interreg funded INNOCAP project to build capacity within the public sector on disruptive technologies and develop a pilot implementation project relating to the Climate Action Plan	Both	Project reporting every 6 months.	Year 1 - 5	Information Systems	DCC Environment www.donegalcoco.ie/	Coordinate and Facilitate	External Funding
BE1.6	Implement Power Management Solution to automatically shut down devices after working hours so that they are not left on without any intervention.	Mitigation	Power Management software logs to demonstrate amount of automatic shut downs.	Ongoing	Information Systems		Fully Accountable	
BE1.7	Work with partners to deliver Intelligent Cities Challenge in Donegal including securing Local Green Deal.	Both	No. of businesses and stakeholders engaged and committed to LGD.	Year 3	Economic Development	ERNACT; Derry City and Strabane District Council; DCC Climate Action Team	Influence	External Funding
BE1.8	Complete Feasibility Assessment for the decarbonization of 15 public buildings in Donegal through the North West Decarb Project	Mitigation	No. of Feasibility Assessments completed Decarbonisation measures (e.g. solar panel PV retrofits) identified and costed.	Year 1	NW Regional Energy Agency	Derry City and Strabane District Council	Fully Accountable	External Funding - Shared Island
BE1.9	Seek funding opportunities to carry out the recommendations of the North West Decarb Project including capital works.	Mitigation	No. of funding streams identified and applied for; Funding secured; Recommendations being progressed.	Year 1 Year 2 Year 5	NW Regional Energy Agency	Derry City and Strabane District Council	Influence	External Funding Project Partners

Strategic Goal 3: Increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout all buildings and infrastructure.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies

BE2- Retrofit buildings as required to increase energy efficiency and reduce emissions.

BE2.1	Implement Energy Efficiency and Fabric Upgrade Programmes for existing social homes to achieve upgrade to a minimum BER B2 rating, reduce GHG emissions and energy consumption; and address fuel poverty.	Mitigation	No. of social houses upgraded to minimum BER B2 standard.	Year 5	Housing	Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage	Fully Accountable	External and DCC match funding
BE2.2	Upgrade existing social housing units that are damaged by defective concrete blocks to a minimum BER B2 to reduce GHG emissions, energy consumption and address fuel poverty.	Mitigation	No. of social houses that are damaged by defective concrete blocks upgraded to minimum BER B2 as part of overall remediation process.	Year 5	Housing	Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage	Fully Accountable	Funding
BE2.3	Work towards affordable homes that are made available for purchase or for rent by the Council under Housing for All having a minimum BER B2 rating.	Mitigation	No. of homes in Housing for All with minimum BER B2 rating.	Year 5	Housing	Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage	Fully Accountable	Funding
BE2.4	Promote the National Retrofitting Scheme to private householders to highlight the package of supports that make it easier and more affordable to undertake home energy upgrades.	Mitigation	No. of private homes retrofitted.	Year 5	NW Regional Energy Agency	SEAI	Advocate	
BE 2.5	Continue work on the EU LIFE Local Energy Agencies in Peripheral Regions (LEAP) project to look at feasibility of housing retrofits in Donegal.	Mitigation	EU LIFE LEAP project completed; Feasible recommendations identified.	Year 5	NW Regional Energy Agency	Neighbouring Energy Agencies	Coordinate and Facilitate	External Funding
BE 2.6	Promote the adaptative re-use of existing buildings in terms of developing community spaces under respective funding programmes such as Town and Village, Community Recognition Fund and RRDF.	Adaptation	The amount of vacant or derelict building brought back into use through the various funding streams	2026 to 2029	Community Development Planning	Local stakeholders	Advocate	Continued funding streams being available
BE 2.7	Renovation of an existing Administration Building (former Army Barracks), to bring it back into use as DCC offices and achieve a BER B2 rating.	Mitigation	Renovation complete BER B2 rating achieved; Office in use with lower energy consumption.	Year 1	Facilities Management		Fully Accountable	

Strategic Goal 3: Increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout all buildings and infrastructure.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
BE 2.8	Continue participation in the European City Facility (EUCF) Project to develop an investment concept for the decarbonisation of the Energy systems across the North West Region.	Mitigation	EUCF Project Completed; Investment Concept identified.	Year 5	NW Regional Energy Agency	Derry City and Strabane District Council; SEAI; Invest NI.	Coordinate and Facilitate	External Funding
BE 2.9	Conduct research and develop case studies from the Council's historic building stock that undertake pre- and post- works energy performance assessments and devise appropriate and sensitive retrofitting/energy upgrading of traditional buildings to inform works to other Council-owned properties and to guide private owners.	Mitigation	Number of Case Studies completed.	Year 2	Planning - Conservation Office	DCC Housing; Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage.	Fully Accountable	External Funding, Resources

BE3- Ensure all new buildings in the County are designed and constructed in line with best energy efficient standards.

BE3.1	Work towards new build social housing units provided by Donegal County Council meeting a minimum A2 BER Rating to reduce GHG emissions, energy consumption and address fuel poverty.	Mitigation	Housing for All Targets - projected versus achieved.	Year 5	Housing	Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage; Approved Housing Bodies (AHBs).	Fully Accountable	Planning Permissions Utilities Availability Funding
BE3.2	Work towards new buildings (dwellings, commercial and public) are designed and constructed to Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) standard by 2025 and Zero Emission Building (ZEB) standard by 2030.	Mitigation	Number of Planning Permissions granted with this Planning Condition.	Year 5	Planning		Influence	Compliance with Planning Conditions
BE3.3	Require, where feasible, that new developments are sited and designed to prioritise safe, direct, and attractive access for pedestrians and cyclists.	Mitigation	Number of Planning Permissions granted with this Planning Condition.	Year 5	Planning		Influence	Compliance with Planning Conditions

Strategic Goal 3: Increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout all buildings and infrastructure.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
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BE4- Support the delivery of renewable electricity generation and transmission infrastructure within the County

BE4.1	Implement the Interreg funded project COPOWER on developing a community based virtual power plant which assists in balancing electricity demand and production. It will create an opportunity to digitalise, decarbonise and decentralise local energy systems.	Mitigation	Project reporting every 6 months.	Year 3	Information Systems	ERNACT CENTRIA University of Applied Science, Finland Nolsoy Energy Ltd, Faroe Islands University of Iceland University of Oulu.	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	Interreg Funding
BE 4.2	Complete the Interreg funded ShareRES project to consider the benefits of Community Power - SHAring REnewable eneRgy through Energy communities.	Mitigation	Project completed; Recommendations being progressed.	Year 1 Year 5	NW Regional Energy Agency	https://www.interregeurope.eu/shareres	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	Interreg Funding
BE 4.3	Prepare an overall Renewable Energy Strategy for the County to support sustainable development of onshore wind and solar power within the County.	Mitigation	Renewable Energy Strategy prepared.	Year 5	NW Regional Energy Agency	Derry City and Strabane District Council	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	Funding
BE 4.4	Support local community-based renewable energy projects and new micro-generation and small-scale generation renewable energy projects.	Mitigation	No. of community based projects engaged with.	Year 5	NW Regional Energy Agency	Derry City and Strabane District Council	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	-
BE 4.5	Advocate for the ongoing expansion and improvements to the electricity grid infrastructure within the County to support renewable generation and supply.	Mitigation	Report on expansion and improvements to the electricity grid infrastructure.	Year 5	NW Regional Energy Agency; ESB.	Derry City and Strabane District Council	Advocate	-

Strategic Goal 3: Increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout all buildings and infrastructure.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
BE 4.6	Work with key partners and stakeholders to support the development of the offshore renewable energy sector in Donegal.	Mitigation	No. of partners/ stakeholders engaged; No. of meetings held; Strategy/Action Plan prepared; Strategy / Action Plan being implemented.	Year 5 Year 5 Year 5 Year 10	Economic Development	Atlantic Technological University (ATU); Killybegs Marine Cluster.	Influence	Staff resources

BE5- Ensure that all Council owned buildings, facilities and infrastructure are resilient to the effects of climate change.

BE5.1	Be proactive in providing flood resilience to municipal infrastructure by conducting flood risk assessments and seeking OPW Funding through their Minor Works programme where necessary and applying nature-based solutions where appropriate.	Adaptation	No. of applications made to the OPW Minor Works Programme for assessments of flood risk to municipal infrastructure (public roads, buildings, bridges); No. of applications made to the OPW Minor Works Programme for capital works to protect municipal infrastructure from flooding; No. of flood alleviation projects progressed.	Year 5	Roads and Transportation; Housing; Facilities.	DCC Flood Relief Schemes Unit; Office of Public Works.	Fully Accountable	External Funding Planning Permission (including environmental consents)
BE5.2	Deliver 'Climate Adaptation & Resilience' projects on the Regional and Local Roads network, to improve the resilience and sustainability of the regional and local road network and minimise activities that are contributors to climate change.	Both	Number of Climate Adaptation projects completed each year	Year 1 - 5	Roads and Transportation	Department of Transport; CARO.	Fully Accountable	Extent of allocation
BE5.3	Ensure that the design of future municipal infrastructure considers flood resilience, applying nature-based solutions where appropriate, and that they do not increase flood risk elsewhere.	Adaptation	No. of municipal infrastructure projects designed and developed in accordance with The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities.	Year 5	Roads and Transportation; Housing; Facilities.	DCC Flood Relief Schemes Unit; Office of Public Works.	Fully Accountable	

Strategic Goal 3: Increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout all buildings and infrastructure.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
BE 5.4	Continue to deliver on the Restoration Improvement (RI) and Restoration Maintenance (RM) Programmes on the public road network.	Adaptation	Full use of allocated RI & RM budgets from the Dept of Transport.	Annual	Roads & Transportation	Department of Transport.	Fully Accountable	Extent of allocation
BE 5.5	Continue to deliver on the Winter Maintenance Programmes for public roads and the introduction of Brine to pre-wet salt.	Adaptation	Full use of allocated WM budgets from the Department of Transport and DCC own resources.	Annual	Roads & Transportation	Department of Transport.	Fully Accountable	Extent of allocation

BE6- Increase the resilience of our Built Heritage to climate change.

BE6.1	Support national and regional initiatives to build climate resilience of architectural and archaeological heritage in public and private ownership e.g the Community Monuments Fund, Historic Towns Initiative, Built Heritage Investment Scheme and Historic Structures Fund.	Adaptation	Number of buildings/sites funded through each of the schemes.	Year 1-5	Cultural Services and Conservation Office	National Monuments Service; The Heritage Council; National Inventory of Architectural Heritage.	Coordinate and Facilitate; Influence	Staff and Resources
BE6.2	Support national and regional initiatives to develop projects to upgrade the climate resilience of traditional buildings and to promote use/adaptive reuse of historic structures.	Adaptation	Number of case studies, events or publications.	Year 4	Cultural Services and Conservation Office	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage; The Heritage Council.	Coordinate and Facilitate; Influence	Staff and Resources
BE6.3	Support national and regional initiatives to undertake a climate risk assessment of local-authority owned heritage assets (cultural, built, archaeological and natural) based on forthcoming methodology for local authorities from the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.	Both	Climate Risk Assessment completed.	Year 5	Cultural Services	Department of Housing; Local Government & Heritage and all DCC directorates.	Fully Accountable	Guidance coming from DHLGH; Resources

Strategic Goal 3: Increase resilience to climate change; reduce greenhouse gas emissions; increase the use of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency throughout all buildings and infrastructure.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
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BE7 - Support the Office of Public Works in providing resilience to the effects of flooding now and in the future

BE7.1	Support the OPW in implementing the EU Floods Directive through the North Western and Erne River Basin Flood Risk Management Plans.	Adaptation	No. of Flood Relief Schemes being delivered; Number of new Schemes launched from the Flood Risk Management Plans; Contribution to latest Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment by the OPW.	Year 1-5 Year 5 Year 2	Flood Relief Schemes Unit	OPW	Influence	OPW Funding
BE7.2	Collaborate with the OPW and lead delivery of viable Flood Relief Schemes already launched for development.	Adaptation	No. of ongoing viable Schemes progressed to construction stage.	Year 1-5	Flood Relief Schemes Unit	OPW	Influence	OPW Funding
BE7.3	Implement and trial a new delivery model for Flood Relief Schemes on behalf of the Office of Public Works.	Adaptation	Report on project specific KPIs as developed in collaboration with the OPW.	Year 5	Flood Relief Schemes Unit	OPW	Influence	OPW Funding
BE7.4	Support national and regional initiatives to review storm water infrastructure to improve sustainable drainage and reduce the risk of flooding in the urban environment.	Adaptation	No. of storm water infrastructure reviews undertaken; No. of improvement projects underway.	Year 5	Roads and Transportation	Uisce Éireann; OPW	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources



NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

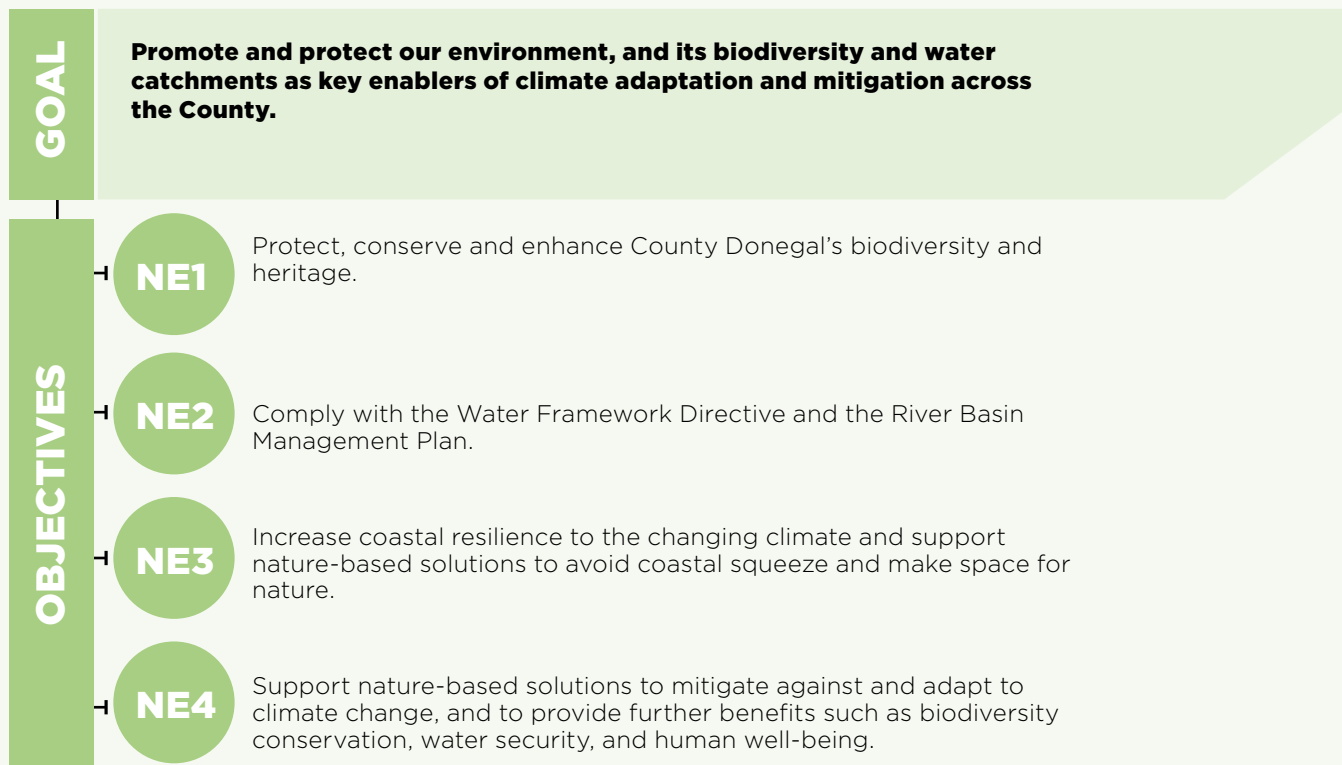
Donegal County Council's goal is to promote and protect our environment, and its biodiversity and water catchments as key enablers of climate adaptation and mitigation across the County. Our objectives are to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity and heritage, meet our obligations in relation to water quality and catchment management, increase coastal resilience to climate change and support nature-based solutions.

Key to meeting our objectives will be the preparation of a Biodiversity Action Plan and implementation both in the short term and long term; and supporting regional and national initiatives relating to Heritage, Biodiversity, Wetlands and Peatlands. The Biodiversity Action Plan will consider measures such as carbon sequestration, flood alleviation via nature based solutions approach, identification and support for eco-system services, invasive species management, pesticide and herbicide reduction, green and blue infrastructure, integrating biodiversity considerations to new and existing development, wildlife corridors identification and enhancement. The Biodiversity Action Plan will also consider how environmental monitoring reports submitted to DCC post-planning can be used to collate data on species and habitats, assess how mitigations are performing, and inform future development.

The implementation of the Biodiversity Action Plan will be underpinned by ecological surveys and assessments to ensure interventions are appropriate to the receiving environment.

Nature-based solutions work with nature rather than against it to provide sustainable, cost-effective solutions to societal challenges such as climate change. These solutions can be highly effective in both adapting to the effects of climate change and as climate mitigation measures. They can play an important role in carbon sequestration, providing and enhancing habitats and ecosystems, soaking up water and slowing water flow - providing flood resilience, improving water quality and soil health, removing pollutants from the air, and temperature regulation.

In addition to environmental gains; nature-based solutions offer invaluable health and wellbeing benefits. Being around trees and nature can reduce stress, improve quality of life, and can speed up recovery times from illness. Urban trees and green infrastructure can remove large amounts of air pollution and dust and improve urban air quality. Trees and nature can also provide for Play & Learning, Shade Cooling & Comfort, Relaxation, and a Sense of Place. Economic benefits include increased land and property values, increased tourism, increased productivity & creativity, and less financial burden on health & emergency services.





NATURAL ENVIRONMENT & GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Strategic Goal 4: Promote and protect our environment, and its biodiversity and water catchments as key enablers of climate adaptation and mitigation across the County.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
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NE1 - Protect, conserve and enhance County Donegal's biodiversity and heritage.

NE1.1	Prepare and begin to implement a Biodiversity Action Plan (including a Pollinator Plan) for the County to protect and enhance local biodiversity including climate-resilient measures.	Both	Plan prepared; Measures being implemented.	Year 1 Year 5	Cultural Services	Heritage Council; NPWS.	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources
NE1.2	Support national and regional initiatives to implement the County Heritage Plan to record, conserve and raise awareness of all aspects of built, natural, archaeological and cultural heritage.	Both	Plan prepared; Measures being implemented.	Year 1 Year 5	Cultural Services	Heritage Council; NPWS.	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources
NE1.3	Support national and regional initiatives to undertake an audit of local authority land and assess biodiversity potential with respect to climate considerations.	Both	Audit completed.	Year 5	Cultural Services	NPWS, Heritage Council; Birdwatch Ireland.	Coordinate and Facilitate	Funding and Resources
NE1.4	Support national and regional initiatives to conduct a county wetland survey and start to implement recommendations in terms of conservation and restoration of wetlands.	Both	Survey completed; Measures being implemented.	Year 1-5	Cultural Services	NPWS; LAWPRO.	Coordinate and Facilitate	Resources
NE1.5	Support the incorporation of net gain biodiversity enhancement as part of the Landscape and Drainage Design of the TEN-T Public Road Improvement Project (Donegal) using biodiversity corridors, landscaping and tree planting and biodiversity rich wetlands.	Mitigation	Complete Landscape and Drainage Design ready for Statutory Process publication.	Year 1	Roads and Transportation	Donegal TEN-T (www.donegal-ten-t.ie)	Fully Accountable	Government Funding of Project Expertise availability

Strategic Goal 4: Promote and protect our environment, and its biodiversity and water catchments as key enablers of climate adaptation and mitigation across the County.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
NE1.6	Support national and regional initiatives to strengthen ecological expertise in the Council.	Mitigation	Appointment of Biodiversity Officer.	Year 1	Cultural Services	Heritage Council	Fully Accountable	External Funding
NE1.7	Support national and regional initiatives in the rehabilitation of peatland as a carbon sink and provide habitat for biodiversity.	Combined	No. of initiatives / projects engaged with; No. of project contributions.	Year 5	Cultural Services; Climate Action Team	Bord na Mona; Coillte; OPW; NPWS; Birdwatch Ireland.	Advocate	External Funding
NE1.8	Reduce the extent of grass cutting carried out in public spaces, to preserve biodiversity and encourage growth of native plants, in line with guidance from the All-Ireland Pollinator Plan.	Combined	Extent of reduction in grass cutting areas (ha).	Year 1 - 5	Roads and Transportation		Fully Accountable	Funding for maintenance of wild areas, Biodiversity backup assistance

NE2 - Comply with the Water Framework Directive and the River Basin Management Plan.

NE2.1	Forestry - Work with Coillte to promote their implementation of appropriate water protection and integration of biodiversity measures in forestry catchments where there is potential for impact on waterbodies (e.g. sediment, pesticides, colour, organic matter and high rainfall events) in line with Water Framework Directive objectives.	Both	Engagement with Coillte	Year 1 - 5	Environment	Coillte	Advocate	Resources
NE2.2	Septic Tanks - Work with the public to promote water protection and integration of biodiversity by issuing promotional material to regulated private water suppliers, well grant applicants and homeowners due for Septic Tank Inspections.	Both	Promotional material prepared and issued; Engagement with grant applicants and homeowners.	Year 1 - 5	Environment		Advocate	Resources
NE2.3	Carry out a review of Section 4 Discharge to Water Licences to determine if they are fit for purpose	Adaptation	Number of Licences reviewed; Number of Licences.	Year 3	Environment		Fully Accountable	Resources
NE2.4	Support the integration of improved water protection design solutions within the TEN-T Public Road Improvement Project, incorporating new road drainage treatment prior to discharge to receiving watercourses.	Mitigation	Protection measures adopted in Scheme	Year 2	Roads and Transportation	Donegal TEN-T (www.donegal-ten-t.ie)	Fully Accountable	Government Funding of Project Expertise availability

Strategic Goal 4: Promote and protect our environment, and its biodiversity and water catchments as key enablers of climate adaptation and mitigation across the County.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies

NE3- Increase the resilience of our coastline to the changing climate.

NE3.1	Support national and regional agencies to develop a Designated Marine Area Plan, off the coast of Donegal and the North West region, in line with provisions in the National Marine Planning Framework and Project Ireland 2040.	Adaptation	Marina Area Plan prepared.	Year 5	Environment	Department of Housing; Local Government and Heritage.	Advocate and Influence	
NE3.2	Undertake Coastal Erosion & Flood Risk Management (CFERM) Studies in vulnerable coastal areas and follow up on recommendations.	Adaptation	Delivery of CFERM Reports; Recommendations being implemented.	Year 2 Year 5	Environment	OPW; Communities; Elected Members.	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	OPW Approval and Funding

NE4 - Support Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) to mitigate against and adapt to climate change, and to provide further benefits such as biodiversity conservation, water security, and human well-being.

NE 4.1	Develop a protocol for the application of NBS to Council projects and provide training on same.	Both	Training of Council staff on NBS alternatives; Examples of best practice in NBS to manage surface water runoff in urban spaces.	Year 2 Year 5	Environment, Climate Action Team	LAWPRO, OPW, NPWS	Coordinate and Facilitate	Funding and Resources
NE4.2	Within the development of Flood Relief Schemes, identify opportunities for Nature Based Solutions as a possible flood relief measure alone, or in combination with other types of flood defence.	Both	No. of Schemes with NBS Opportunity Mapping Prepared	Year 5	Flood Relief Schemes Unit	OPW	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	Catchment suitability
NE4.3	Based on Nature Based Solutions opportunity mapping, assess feasibility and consider multi benefits of implementation within an overall NBS road map.	Both	No. of Schemes with NBS Road Map prepared; No. Schemes with NBS being progressed.	Year 5	Flood Relief Schemes Unit	OPW, Coillte, NPWS, Stakeholder Groups, Communities	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	Funding and Resources
NE4.4	Based on NBS road maps, seek funding opportunities for implementing NBS in appropriate catchments throughout Donegal.	Both	One or more NBS Pilot Projects being progressed.	Year 5	Climate Action Team	OPW, Coillte, NPWS, Stakeholder Groups, Communities	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	Catchment suitability, Stakeholder and Community buy-in

Strategic Goal 4: Promote and protect our environment, and its biodiversity and water catchments as key enablers of climate adaptation and mitigation across the County.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
NE4.5	Integrate Nature based design solutions in the form of SuDs within the TEN-T Priority Route Improvement Donegal Project.	Mitigation	Complete SuDs Drainage Design, ready for Statutory Process publication.	Year 1	Roads and Transportation	Donegal TEN-T (www.donegal-ten-t.ie)	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	Government Funding of Project Expertise availability



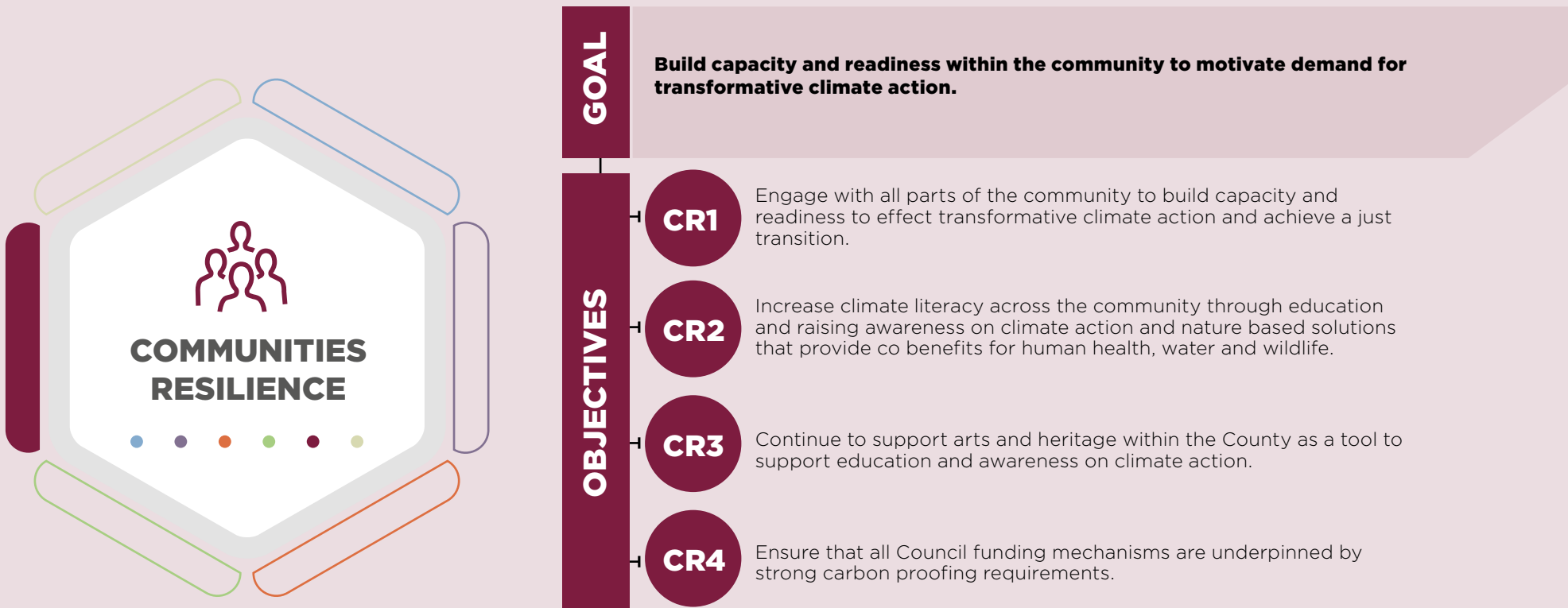
COMMUNITIES RESILIENCE

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The national Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP23) states that “delivering on our climate ambition requires the Government and citizens of Ireland, to come together in a strengthened ‘social contract’ for climate action and the co-creation of real solutions to climate change, that are meaningful, inclusive, fair and accessible for all, thereby prioritising a just transition”.

The term ‘Community’ can be defined as anyone who lives, works in or visits the county for example the business community, volunteer groups, schools, the sports community and residents.

Donegal County Council's goal is to build capacity and readiness within the community to motivate demand for transformative climate action. Our objectives are to engage with all parts of the community, raise awareness on climate action, support arts and heritage as a tool to support education and awareness on climate change and ensure strong carbon proofing requirements within our community funding mechanisms.





COMMUNITIES RESILIENCE

Strategic Goal 5: Build capacity and readiness within the community to motivate demand for transformative climate action.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
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CR1- Engage with all parts of the community to build capacity and readiness to effect transformative climate action and achieve a just transition.

CR1.1	Ensure that residents of Donegal have the opportunity to meaningfully engage in, and shape the development of climate action policies and projects delivered by Donegal County Council.	Both	Number of events and engagements.	1 - 5 yrs	Community Development; Water & Environment.	Local Community Org; Gov agencies.	Co-ordinate and Facilitate	Resources & Funding
CR1.2	Provide a point of contact to assist GAA Green Club Programme to implement projects that contribute to the objectives of a national climate initiative.	Both	Lead put in place.	Year 1	Water & Environment	DECC; CARO.	Influence	Staff resource
CR1.3	Provide dedicated Climate Action information on Donegal County Council website.	Both	Climate action space provided.	Year 1	Climate Action Team	Information Systems	Fully Accountable	
CR1.4	Work with local partners to develop Community Gardens in Donegal to support reducing greenhouse gases, improving food security, improving biodiversity and adapting to climate change impacts	Adaptation	Development of new Community Gardens across the county.	Year 1 - 5	Community Development	HSE, Healthy Ireland; SlainteCare; LCDC; key external stakeholders; Local Community Organisations.	Fully Accountable	Support of local community groups and funding through the Healthy Ireland and SlainteCare projects
CR1.5	Support the delivery of Donegal County Council PEACEPLUS projects in line with the UN Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.	Both	Projects evaluated to show how they will make a contribution to sustainable development.	Year 1 - 3	PEACEPLUS Programme	Community Development; External partners; Local Community Organisations.	Fully Accountable	Support of local community groups and funding through the PEACEPLUS Programme

Strategic Goal 5: Build capacity and readiness within the community to motivate demand for transformative climate action.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
CR1.6	Work with partners in the Public Participation Network (PPN) to enhance awareness and understanding of climate issues within the wider community sector including for example, those relating to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • water conservation/ rainwater harvesting, • nature-based solutions, • circular economy, • active travel, • sustainable event planning. 	Both	Actively showcase and celebrate environmentally responsible actions and groups supporting same; No. of events held that enhance climate awareness and understanding.	Year 2 Year 1 - 5	PPN Secretariat	PPN National Structures, Dept of Environment, Local Community Organisations; All DCC Departments.	Coordinate and Facilitate Influence	Support of local community groups and funding through the PEACEPLUS Programme
CR1.7	Support national and regional initiatives to compile an Audit of Private Group Water Schemes to review energy use, leak management and long term Sustainability.	Both	Audit and report completed	Year 1	Environment	Group Water Schemes National Federation of Group Water Schemes.	Influence	Group Water Scheme buy-in Funding for audits and reports

CR2 - Increase climate literacy across the community through education and raising awareness on climate action.

CR2.1	Support initiatives to promote and raise awareness of biodiversity and climate issues, natural capital and ecosystems-based adaptation.	Both	Dissemination of information on activities	Annual	Cultural Services		Influence	
CR2.2	Utilise the Public Library Network as a community hub to support national, regional and local awareness campaigns of Climate Action Plans.	Both	Dissemination of information Programme of events prepared; No. of events hosted Energy kits provided.	1 - 5 yrs	Cultural Services; Energy Management Team.	NW Regional Energy Agency, Climate Action Team, SEAI	Coordinate and Facilitate	

Strategic Goal 5: Build capacity and readiness within the community to motivate demand for transformative climate action.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
CR2.3	Support national and regional initiatives to develop countywide climate related educational and awareness programme to include information events, communication campaigns and guidance documents.	Both	Annual programme agreed	1 - 5yrs	Water & Environment	CARO, DECC	Influence	Funding
CR2.4	Partner with research institutes to explore innovative climate adaptation and mitigation research projects that also achieve circular economy objectives.	Both	No. of projects		LEO/ Economic Development/ Env		Influence	
CR2.5	Support National and Regional agencies to roll out educational projects in schools and Community events as opportunities to disseminate Climate Change information to the public.	Both	Delivery of 40 projects across the county focused on the Green Economy, capacity building and climate change and adaptation	1 - 5 yrs	Climate Change Team	Community Development, LCDC, PPN, Local Community Organisations	Advocate	Development of initiatives at national, regional and local level. Engagement of the Community sector.
CR 2.6	Increase awareness and practice of regenerative tourism in our County, to enable visitors to have a positive impact on their holiday destination.	Adaptation / Mitigation	Secure the participation of 12 tourism businesses in the programme	Year 1-5	LEO	Chamber of Commerce, Donegal - Ireland's DNA Failite Ireland DCC Economic Development	Coordinate and Facilitate	

CR3- Continue to support arts and heritage within the County as a tool to support education and awareness on climate action.

CR3.1	Support National and Regional agencies to prepare programmes to raise awareness of climate action within Cultural and Biodiversity Services and Creative Arts.	Both	No. of programmes delivered focussing on climate action	Year 1-5	Cultural Services; Donegal Culture and Creativity Team.	Climate Action Team	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources
CR3.2	Support National and Regional agencies to identify sites/areas where loss due to climate change is likely or inevitable, carry out recording of architectural, archaeological and cultural heritage at these sites to ensure preservation by record, and palliative curation to assist communities with loss.	Both	No. of case studies complete	Medium term	Cultural Services	Local community organisations	Fully Accountable	Funding and Resources

Strategic Goal 5: Build capacity and readiness within the community to motivate demand for transformative climate action.

Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
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CR4 - Ensure that all Council funding mechanisms are underpinned by strong carbon proofing requirements.

CR4.1	Ensure that Donegal County Council's Business Continuity Plan is reviewed on a regular basis to reflect climate change.	Both	Review carried out.	1 - 5 yrs	Corporate	All Council Services	Fully Accountable	
CR4.2	Administer the Community Climate Action Fund to support communities to deliver localised climate action projects.	Both	No. of applications received; No. of projects delivered.	1 - 5 yrs	Water & Environment	DECC, CARO	Fully Accountable	
CR4.3	Include 'Sustainability and Climate Change' scoring on relevant grant assessments to ensure that community groups/ stakeholders consider and incorporate Climate Mitigation and Adaptation in all their grant funded activities.	Both	Application forms updated.	Year 1	All Services responsible for grant administration and scoring	Water and Environment; Cultural Services; Community Development; LEO.	Influence	



SUSTAINABILITY AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The circular economy and climate action are inherently interlinked. Our current linear production and consumption model (based on produce, use and dispose) is significantly carbon and resource intensive.

We need to move to a more sustainable production and consumption model by changing how we consume materials and resources, how we design the products that households and businesses use and how we extend the productive life of all goods and products. Avoiding waste in the first instance is a climate action we can take every day.

A circular economy maximises the use of resources, products, and assets, and minimises resource consumption and wastage in all forms. Changing to become a circular economy will not only conserve resources, but will also reduce environmental and climate impacts, encourage innovation and thereby increase competitiveness and create new jobs. Everyone can play a part by choosing how resources are used or consumed, and by reusing, recycling and minimising waste in their daily lives.





SUSTAINABILITY AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Strategic Goal 6: Support sustainable and circular initiatives and infrastructure within the County.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies

SR1- Ensure that sustainable resource use is embedded in all Council operations and is a key determinant in all future Council procurement.

SR1.1	Support National and Regional agencies to deliver energy efficiency refurbishment of pump stations within Taking in Charge Programme for Group Water Schemes (GWS).	Mitigation	KPI for implementation & Projected savings against baseline data.	5yrs	Environment	DHLGH & GWS	Fully Accountable	
SR1.2	Support National and Regional agencies to deliver Water Conservation on Group Water Schemes (GWS) under the Taking in Charge (TIC) Programme for GWS.	Mitigation	Compliance with Uisce Éireann (UE) Unaccounted for Water (UFW) values.	5yrs	Environment	DHLGH, UE & GWS	Fully Accountable	
SR1.3	Integrate Green Public Procurement within multi-annual frameworks for rural water programme (MARWP) & Environmental Infrastructure Projects.	Both	GPP Audit of Projects.	5yrs	Water & Environment	OGP & EC Procurement, DCC Finance	Fully Accountable	
SR1.4	Support national, regional and local initiatives to integrate climate change considerations at the planning and development stage for festivals/ events.	Both	Annual reporting of measures undertaken.	Year 1-5	Housing, Corporate; Cultural Services.		Advocate	Resources & Cooperation of partners

SR2- Support businesses in accelerating climate action and sustainable practices

SR 2.1	Develop and provide a series of green & climate-based workshops for owner managers of indigenous Donegal companies.	Adaptation / Mitigation	No. of workshops	Year 1-5	LEO		Coordinate and Facilitate	Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Donegal Tourism
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Strategic Goal 6: Support sustainable and circular initiatives and infrastructure within the County.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
SR 2.2	Provide assistance to Enterprises in their investment in equipment & technologies to reduce their impact on the environment.	Mitigation	No. of Enterprises assisted.	Year 1-5	LEO		Coordinate and Facilitate	Economic Development, Chamber of Commerce, Donegal Tourism
SR 2.3	Provide Energy Management Training programmes to businesses in Donegal to help them reduce their carbon footprint.	Both	No. of businesses in Energy Management Programmes.	Year 1-5	LEO		Coordinate and Facilitate	Energy Management Team, Enterprise Ireland, Donegal Tourism
SR 2.4	Deliver programmes to assist businesses in Donegal improve the environmental profile of their business in the marketplace.	Both	Approved Voucher Numbers; No. of Days Consultancy.	Year 1-5	LEO		Coordinate and Facilitate	Enterprise Ireland, Donegal Tourism
SR 2.5	Support Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the tourism sector to embrace sustainability practices in their businesses through the EU funded Turbo Project.	Both	No. of businesses participating over 3 years.	Year 3	Economic Development		Influence	Staff Resources

SR3- Support the transition to a circular economy within the County.

SR 3.1	Promote best practice construction and demolition waste management e.g. use of recycled aggregates and encourage establishment of private recycling facilities where appropriate.	Both	No. of recycling facilities established; Quantities of aggregates recycled.	Year 3	Environment	Planning	Advocate	Resources & Funding
SR 3.2	Improve waste segregation at source in Council operations.	Both	% Improvement.	Year 2	Housing, Corporate, Cultural Services, Roads & Transportation		Fully Accountable	
SR 3.3	Work towards the elimination of CO ₂ emissions due to Leachate Transportation from closed landfill sites and develop a program for reduction.	Mitigation	Baseline CO ₂ recorded for current activity measured against completion of the Capital Project.	Year 4	Water & Environment		Fully Accountable	

Strategic Goal 6: Support sustainable and circular initiatives and infrastructure within the County.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
SR 3.4	Support the increase in water fountains to reduce single use plastic waste.	Adaptation	Install 10 Water Fountains.	Year 1 - 4	Water & Environment	Uisce Éireann, DECC, Local communities,	Influence	Funding & Resources
SR 3.5	Support Council tenants to achieve improved waste segregation and climate objectives.	Both	% diverted recycling / food waste recycling.	Year 1 - 5	Housing, Corporate, Cultural Service	DCC Housing	Advocate	Resources, Data
SR 3.6	Support community sustainable waste management initiatives and circular economy initiatives e.g. re-use projects.	Both	No. of initiatives supported each year.	Year 1 -5	Water & Environment, Community Development		Advocate	Funding & Resources
SR 3.7	Continue to work as part of the Connaught Ulster Waste Enforcement Regional Local Authority (WERLA) office to implement and encourage positive climate action practices.	Both	Reporting twice yearly on positive climate outputs	Year 1 -5	Water & Environment	WERLAs, Regional Waste Management Planning Office National Waste Collection Permit Office.	Influence	-
SR 3.8	Promote adequate space for appropriate waste management in new developments.	Both	No. of Planning Applications with this condition attached.	Year 1 -5	Planning		Influence	-
SR 3.9	Align Council waste contracts with the waste hierarchy in accordance with the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy.	Mitigation	Review of contracts.	Year 1 -5	Housing, Corporate, Cultural Services	Water & Environment	Fully Accountable	Staff Resources
SR 3.10	Support a wider roll out of segregated brown bin collection systems to capture this resource for treatment through Anaerobic Digestion and composting in line with the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy.	Mitigation	No of households with a food waste service % of food waste diverted for treatment.	Year 1 -5	Water & Environment		Influence	Funding & Resources

Strategic Goal 6: Support sustainable and circular initiatives and infrastructure within the County.								
Ref.	Action	Adaption/ Mitigation	Tracking Measure/KPI	Timeframe	Lead DCC Department	Partners	Council Role	Dependencies
SR 3.11	Support the delivery of the National Waste Management Plan for a Circular Economy.	Both	Targets being met.	Year 1 -5	Water & Environment		Fully Accountable	Funding & Resources

SR4- Support farmers in the shift toward low-carbon and climate-resilient agricultural practices

SR 4.1	Support other agencies in their development of a joined-up awareness/knowledge transfer strategy for the agricultural and food sectors.	Both	Support provided through DCC led Donegal Water Forum and Border-Region Operation Committee.	Year 5	Environment	Farmers Organisations ACRES Teagasc LAWPRO	Advocate	Resources and Funding Stakeholder Buy In
SR 4.2	Support other agencies in their development of a tool kit and training programme for engagement during routine farm visits.	Both	Support provided through DCC led Donegal Water Forum and Border-Region Operation Committee.	Year 5	Environment	Farmers Organisations ACRES Teagasc LAWPRO	Advocate	Resources and Funding Stakeholder Buy In
SR 4.3	Use the forthcoming County Biodiversity Action Plan as a vehicle to highlight the range of biodiversity opportunities that can be taken up at farm level.	Both	Biodiversity opportunities highlighted within Biodiversity Action Plan.	Year 2	Cultural Services	Farmers Organisations ACRES Teagasc LAWPRO	Advocate	Resources and Funding Stakeholder Buy In
SR 4.3	Support Organic Farming by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocate for training in sales and marketing for farmers producing for local markets Supporting the provision of market spaces within public realm improvements Supporting local trading Promoting the Grow it Yourself movement by highlighting the positive benefits of locally grown organic produce. 	Both	Support provided through DCC led Donegal Water Forum and Border-Region Operation Committee; No. of market spaces integrated within public realm improvement projects; No. of local markets in the County; Campaign on Grow it Yourself developed.	Year 1-5	Environment Community Development Planning	Economic Development Farmers Organisations Community Groups	Advocate	Resources and Funding Stakeholder Buy In





Comhairle Contae Dhún na nGall

GNÍOMHÚ AR SON NA HAERÁIDE
CLIMATE ACTION

Donegal County Council

4

DONEGAL'S DECARBONISING ZONES

DONEGAL'S DECARBONISING ZONES

In response to Action 165 of the Government's Climate Action Plan 2019, Local Authorities were required to 'identify and develop plans for one Decarbonising Zone' within their respective administrative area, for submission to the Department of Housing Local Government and Heritage (DHLGH), as action lead, in Q2 2021, Circular Letter LGSM01-2021.

A Decarbonising Zone (DZ) was defined as:

“Spatial area identified by the local authority, in which a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures and action owners are identified to address local low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions and climate needs to contribute to national climate action targets”.

Decarbonising Zones will provide a test bed of what is possible for decarbonisation and climate action at local and community levels, to help support and realise national climate objectives. The DZ is the focus for a range of climate mitigation, adaptation and biodiversity measures including the identification of projects and outcomes to assist in the delivery of the National Climate Objective.

In the period intervening, strengthened climate policy enshrined through the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, and the publication of the Climate Action Plan 2021, influenced change to the delivery of DZs, from the approach previously advised. The Department of Environment, Climate and Communications (DECC) were advised as the action leads for local authority climate action planning and DZs.

The LACAP is acknowledged as being an important instrument to promote and activate community level climate action. The relationship between the LACAP and DZs being seen as instrumental in the advancement of the DZs. To ensure the success of DZs in developing and implementing climate change at local level they were given statutory footing as part of the LACAP as notified by DECC in 2023.

DZs are now a component of the LACAP and subject to the process, statutory timeframes, and procedural requirements of developing the LACAP as provided for by legislation. Technical Annex D of the Local Authority Climate Action Plan Guidelines entitled “Decarbonising Zones” supports local authorities in the development of DZ.

4.1 Purpose of Decarbonising Zones

DZs play a crucial role in not only accelerating learning and innovation but also understanding the complexity and scale of decarbonising the economy and wider society. They serve as platforms to experiment with new technologies, policies, and strategies for decarbonisation and provide a controlled environment where researchers, businesses, and policymakers can collaborate to test and refine innovative solutions.

This spatial area serves as a trial ground for new ideas, facilitates collaboration and knowledge-sharing, and informs decision-making for scaling up decarbonization efforts.

DZs enable stakeholders to gather data and insights on the feasibility, effectiveness, and costs of different decarbonization measures. This information can then be used to inform decision-making at a larger scale, facilitating the replication and scaling up of successful interventions across the County, in other regions or other sectors.

Local Authorities are considered key drivers to advance the implementation of national climate policy at local level. They have a deep understanding of their local context, including the specific climate challenges and opportunities in their area. They can tailor national climate policies to suit local needs and priorities, ensuring effective implementation.

Despite not having direct authority over all sectors, Local Authorities can still have a significant impact on emission reductions through working with key stakeholders to influence, coordinate, facilitate and advocate for change.

Working as one community, in partnership, and sharing our knowledge, skills, and experiences to deliver effective climate action.

4.2 Decarbonising Zone Selection

DZs vary in terms of their nature, size, shape, geographical location, as well as natural and built characteristics. Annex D notes the stages involved in developing the framework for DZs and is informed by the place-based and systems- thinking approach to generate locally tailored policy and assist in the delivery of effective climate action. The key characteristics being continuous learning and improvement over time, with engagement and collaboration with stakeholders crucial. This approach informs the five key stages outlined in Figure 4.1.



Figure 4.1 Five key stages to the development of the DZ

Following guidance set out in Circular Letter LGSM01-2021 issued by the DHLGH in February 2021, Donegal County Council invited communities to submit an expression of interest to be selected to become a Decarbonisation Zone for Donegal. All submissions were examined and a number of workshops were held with Elected Members. After this process it was agreed to select two Decarbonisation Zones for County Donegal. The two selected Decarbonisation Zones are:

An Fálcarrach/Gort an Choirce

Carndonagh

Both the Carndonagh and An Fálcarrach/Gort an Choirce DZ's fall within the overarching criteria set out which required the DZ to be either:

- (i) Urban areas and agglomerations with a population not less than 5,000 persons,
- (ii) Rural areas with an area of not less than 4km²,
- (iii) Other location/areas that can demonstrate decarbonisation at a replicable scale.

Other considerations also come into play in the identification of the DZ's. These were grounded in the potential value or opportunities that may be realised to deliver on the objectives of the DZ as outlined in Annex D of the Guidelines including:

TRANSPORT: Existing and planned levels of accessibility and infrastructure looking at the potential for increased use of public transport, promotion of mobility hubs, reduction in car dependency, promotion of active travel through existing and proposed greenways, blueways and greyways within and between settlement areas to support modal shift.

BUILDINGS: The potential for emission reduction and energy efficiency of the residential sector, public sector, and commercial buildings in line with specific targets set. Consideration of settlement patterns, density, and location to support the more energy efficient use of land, infrastructure in areas of energy, transport, water etc.

GREEN SPACES AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE: The potential for carbon sequestration, reduction in urban heat islands effects and managed enhancement of biodiversity.

COMPLEMENTARY INFRASTRUCTURE: The potential for existing or planned infrastructure to facilitate emissions reduction through renewable electricity generation and transmission, electric vehicle charging, anaerobic digester etc.

LAND AND ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE: Consideration of important environmental designations, future development potential or legacy issues.

AIR QUALITY: The air quality status and the potential for enhanced air quality through the implementation of a range of climate action measures.

WASTE MANAGEMENT: Considerations of the opportunities that exist for promoting more efficient waste management, the circular economy and green procurement.

CO-BENEFITS: The potential for opportunities arising from adaptation, mitigation, and biodiversity measures, in particular carbon sequestration including re-wetting and restoring peatlands, re-use of managed landfills, the enhancement of carbon sinks, improved air quality, afforestation and tree planting measures, improved health, lower noise levels.

PLANNING POLICY SUPPORTS: Potential for the further integration of climate action policy and spatial planning across the policy areas of land use and transportation policy, energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and infrastructure, district heating, energy storage, natural environment policies, flood risk management and 'smart towns/cities' initiatives etc.

COMMUNITY ACTIVATION AND READINESS: Considerations of the existing and potential capacity, activation and readiness of stakeholders and communities to contribute and participate.



4.3 An Fál Carrach/Gort a' Choirce

An Fál Carrach and Gort a' Choirce are located in the heart of the Gaeltacht of Cloch Cheann Fhaola on the northwest coast of Donegal.

The DZ area encompasses the towns of Falcarragh ("An Fál Carrach" in Irish) and Gortahork ("Gort an Choirce" in Irish) in County Donegal. It is home to Ballyness Bay SAC and Gweedore Bay and Islands SAC; and Falcarragh to Meenlaragh SPA. It is located along the scenic Wild Atlantic Way.

An Fál Carrach has a population of approximately 860 people and Gort a' Choirce, has a population of 185. There are other townlands inside the DZ, these being, Killult, Carrowcanon, Ballyness, Greenes Homes, Margheraroarty, Meenlaragh, and Dunmore. The total population in the DZ area (as of the 2016 census) is 3,324, representing 2% of the County population.

The population density in the DZ is 59 people per square kilometre. Most of the population are between the age of 50 and 70 years old. The DZ territory is mainly rural, with large peatlands and some agricultural land.

The spatial area of the An Fál Carrach/Gort an Choirce DZ is approximately 50km² - see Figure 4.2.



Figure 4.2 - Map of Falcarragh/Gort a' Choirce Decarbonisation Zone

4.3.1 - Community Partners - LAN FUINNIMH

The vision of LAN FUINNIMH is to develop a sustainable local community which combines two parishes in collaboration, to achieve energy independence through efficiency and the use of local natural energy sources. LAN FUINNIMH operates a community enterprise providing organic produce and is located in Cill Ulta, between An Fál Carrach and Gort a' Choirce, in the heart of the Gaeltacht of Cloch Cheann Fhaola on the northwest coast of Donegal.

LAN FUINNIMH Sustainable Energy Community (SEC) is supported locally by Na Tithe Gloine, located in Cill Ulta, Co. Donegal. LAN FUINNIMH have hosted numerous Energy Clinic events and worked with their SEC Mentor in visiting local community buildings and homes to provide advice on energy efficiency and upgrades. LAN FUINNIMH SEC have developed an Energy Master Plan for the area. In the Energy Master Plan the SEC team have set out their vision in a Community Charter:

SEC VISION

Is to develop a sustainable local community which combines two parishes in collaboration, to achieve energy independence through efficiency and the use of local natural energy sources.

SEC CORE PRINCIPLES

“To develop a best practice model community collaboration and future planning. We will achieve this by supporting education and training to enhance local knowledge of sustainability issues such as climate change, increasing energy costs and transition from fossil fuels.

A key aim is to support and create new local employment in our natural growing centre through further development, introduction of eco-tourism and to showcase the centre as a unique exemplar of sustainability.”

LAN have remained active as both members of the SEC network and also as SEAI county mentors to other communities. As such, LAN have continued to examine and build a greater understanding of energy use in the DZ. LAN's activity as SEC mentors predominantly focused on the built environment (Residential and Non-residential) and transport.

4.3.2 Decarbonising Zone Vision:

Through consultation, Donegal County Council and local stakeholders will develop a vision statement for the An Fál Carrach/Gort an Choirce DZ.

4.3.3 Baseline Emissions Inventory for the An Fálcarrach/Gort an Choire DZ

Donegal County Council engaged Bable Consulting Ltd to carry out a Tier 3 Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI) of GHG emissions for the baseline year 2019 in accordance with the requirements of the Climate Action Planning Guidelines and in particular Annex D.

The Tier 3 BEI is the bottom-up and spatially led approach for data analysis, which uses local-scale datasets (where available) to look at the DZ's GHG emissions across various sectors including:

- Residential
- Commercial & Industrial Processes
- Transport
- Agriculture
- LULUCF
- Waste
- Donegal County Council's Own Emissions

Full details of the Baseline Emissions Inventory for the DZ accompany this LACAP.

The total baseline GHG emission for the DZ in 2019 was 39.17ktCO₂e.

The Transport Sector accounts for the greatest percentage of total emission at 34.6%. Other significant emission sectors include Residential (28.9%) and LULUCF (20%). A summary is shown on Figure 4.3.

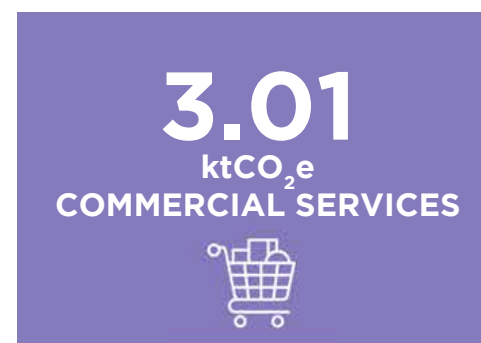
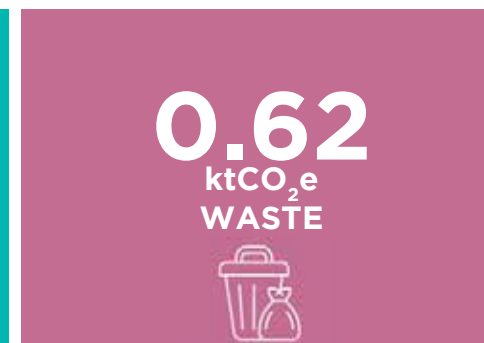


Figure 4.3: Baseline Emissions Inventory Results – An Fálcarrach/Gort an Choire DZ, 2019

4.3.3.1 Residential

The Residential sector includes emissions from household activities. The Census 2016 data shows that there are 1,387 residential properties in An Fálcarrach/Gort an Choirce DZ.

When energy use is converted to GHG emissions, the residential sectors total emissions are 11.33 ktCO₂e. In the DZ, the emissions for the Residential sector represents 28.9% of the total. The emissions from electricity consumption accounts for 22.9%. Most emissions in the DZ's households come from space heating (8.06 ktCO₂e). At a county and national scale, space heating is also the primary source of emissions in the Residential sector, following the same proportion of the DZ. The Residential emissions for the DZ, County Donegal, and national levels are shown in Figure 4.4.

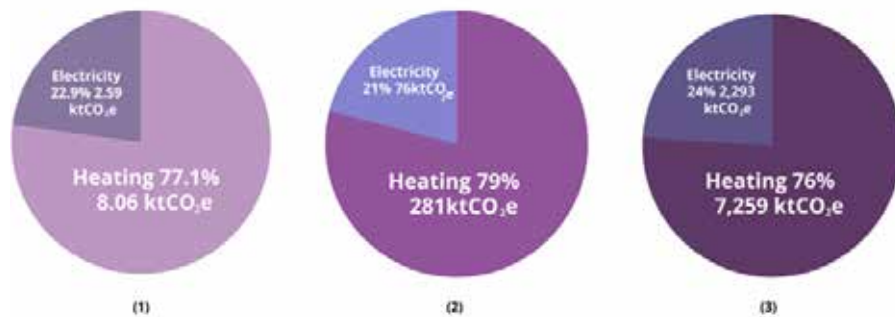


Figure 4.4 Decarbonisation Zone (1), County Donegal (2) and National split (3) of Residential energy CO₂ emissions

The majority of households use oil and peat as fuel sources for space heating. Specifically, 44% of all households in the DZ have oil-fired boilers and 37% use peat.

Building Energy Ratings

Building Energy Ratings (BERs) measure the energy performance of a building. They are measured on a scale from A1 to G, where A1 is the most efficient and G is the least. The level is calculated based on the amount of energy required to heat, cool, ventilate, and light a building according to SEAI-registered BER assessors. Figure 4.5 shows the distribution of the most recent BER ratings in the DZ. Figure 4.6 indicates this distribution of the average in the DZ.

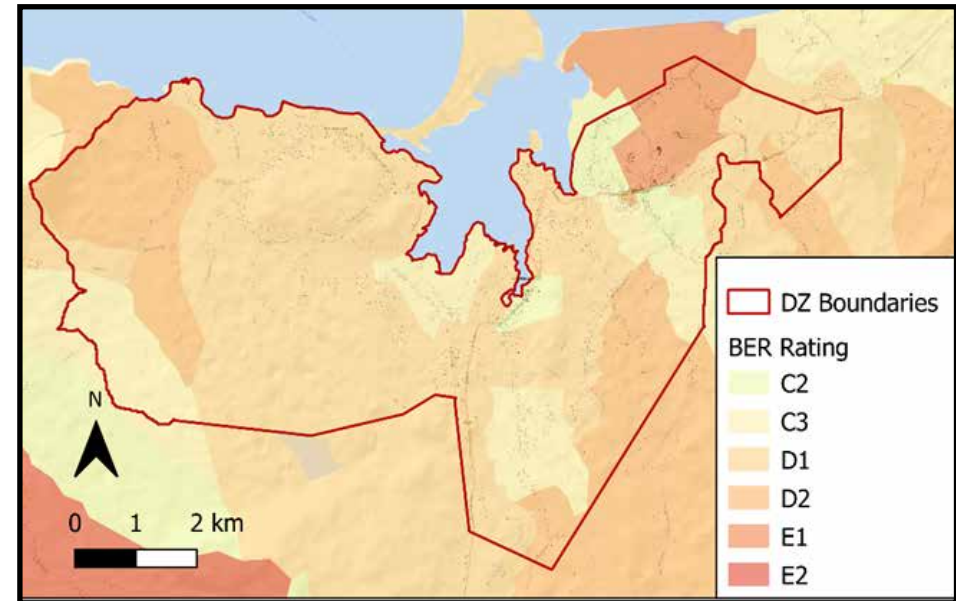


Figure 4.5 Average Residential BER rating per small area in the DZ

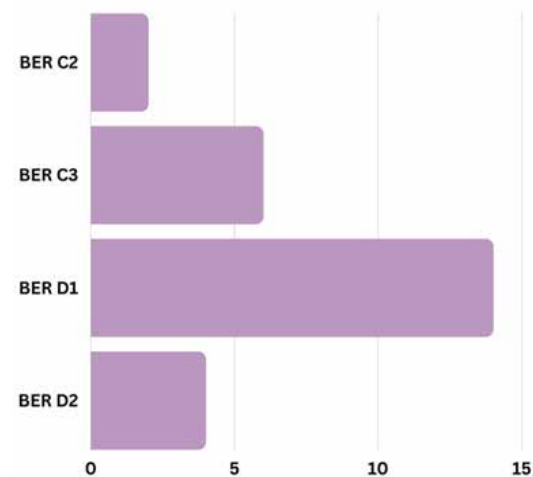


Figure 4.6. Domestic BER Distribution

As indicated by Figures 4.5 and 4.6, the BER rating for the small areas in the DZ is predominantly low, ranging from D2 to C2.

4.3.3.2 Transport

The Tier 3 BEI found that total transport emissions for the DZ were 13.55ktCO₂eq / 34.6% of the total CO₂ emissions in the DZ.

Transportation emissions include emissions from private cars, goods vehicles, motorcycles, heavy machines and Public Service Vehicles (PSVs). Figure 4.7 shows the breakdown of transport emissions in the DZ. Goods vehicles contribute the highest proportion of emissions in the sector at 63.6% of emissions, followed by private cars with 32.9%. In Figure 4.8, the emissions breakdown per vehicle fuel type is shown.

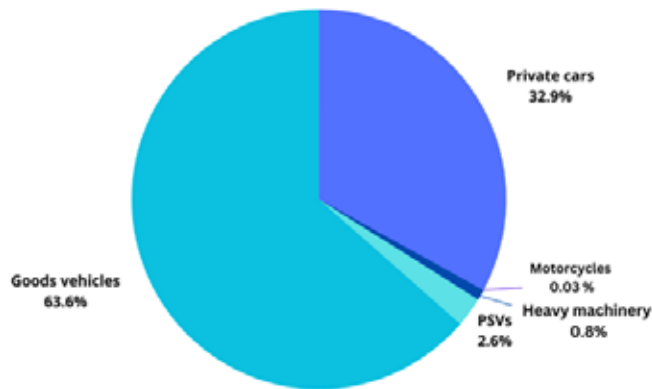


Figure 4.7 Breakdown of Transport emissions for each type of vehicle

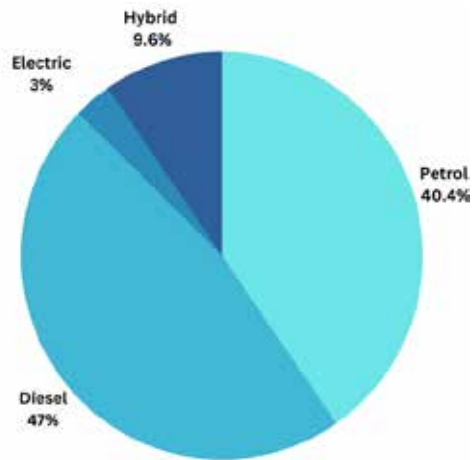


Figure 4.8 Private cars breakdown by type of fuel in the DZ. 2016

There is a high dependency on private cars, it is estimated that of the mechanically propelled vehicles within the DZ area, 1,535 are private cars.

4.3.3.3 Non-residential and Industrial

The An Fálcarrach/Gort an Chiorce DZ is well served by educational facilities at primary and post-primary levels. There are 6 primary schools and 1 secondary school in the DZ area.

Emissions from the non-residential sector refer to commercial and academic activities. Figure 4.9 shows that industrial activities contribute 2.2% to the sector emissions. Thus, the majority of emissions stem from commercial and educational activities.

In total, there are 3.18kt CO₂ of industrial and non-residential emissions.

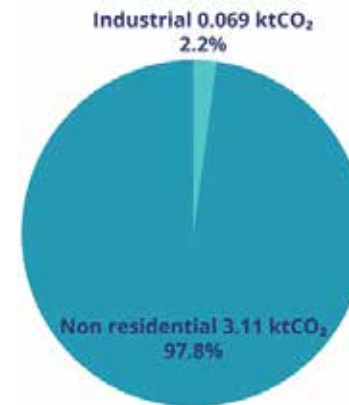


Figure 4.9 Non-residential and Industrial emissions in the DZ. 2019

The calculation of the emissions for commercial buildings was done through the BER rating, showing the average energy consumption. Figure 4.10 shows the majority of commercial buildings have either a D1 or an E2 energy rating.

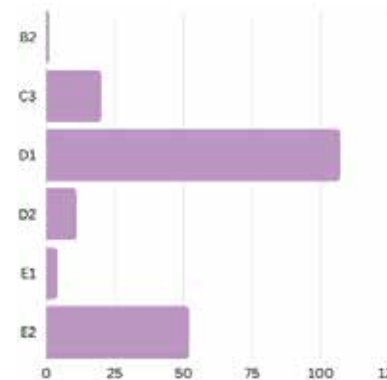


Figure 4.10. Distribution of commercial buildings depending on BER rating in the DZ

4.3.3.4 Agriculture

In the DZ, the agricultural sector accounts for 2.68 kt CO₂e or 6.8% of the total CO₂ eq. emissions. Compared to the county and national levels, the DZ contributes a smaller percentage of emissions from agriculture due to a lower proportion of arable land. The sources of emissions from agriculture are from livestock and agriculture activities. Data was obtained from the “AgriLivestock” and “AgriOther” datasets in MapElre . Figure 4.11 shows the breakdown of emissions from agriculture.

Livestock emissions accounted for 1.42 ktCO₂e, equivalent to 53% of the total agricultural emissions in the DZ. Emissions named “Other”, representing emissions from machinery and vehicles, inorganic fertilisers, soil processes and applications, amounted to 26 kt CO₂e or 47% of the total sector emissions.

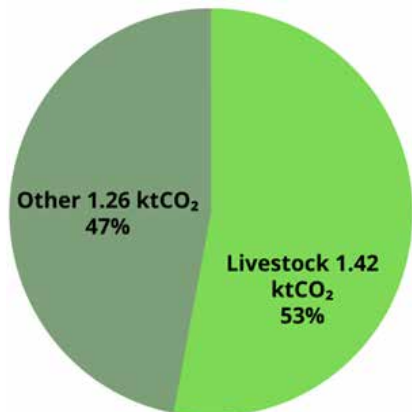
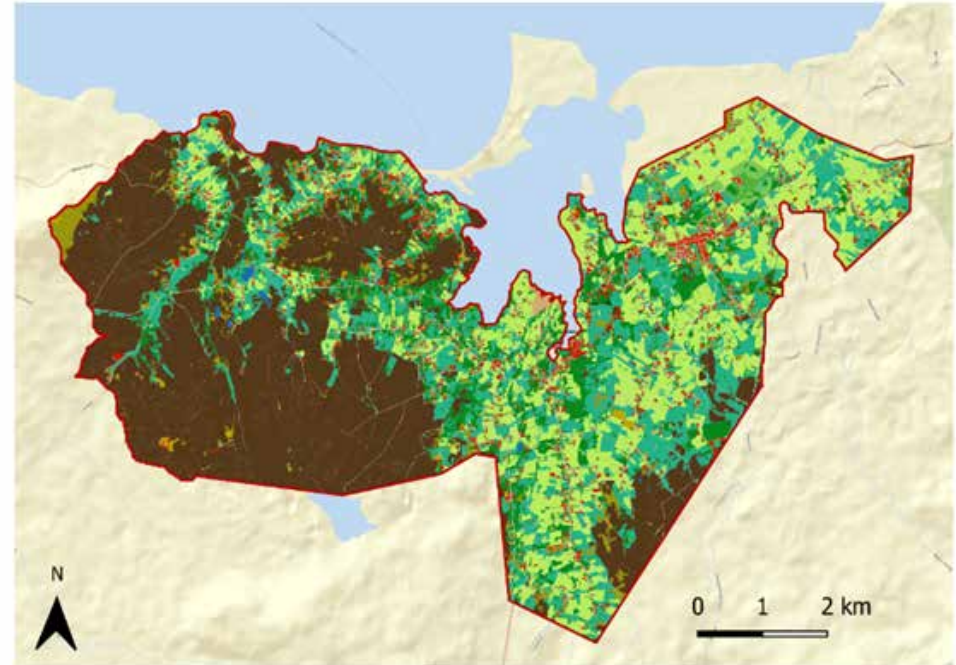


Figure 4.11 Agricultural emissions breakdown in the DZ, 2019

4.3.3.5 LULUCF

In the DZ, LULUCF accounts for 20% of the total emissions, with 7.82 kt CO₂ equivalent emitted. When compared to county-level results, the DZ has a higher share of total emissions from LULUCF overall.

In Figure 4.12, a land cover map is shown of the DZ. There is a high area of peatland in the southern part of the DZ.



National Land Cover Map

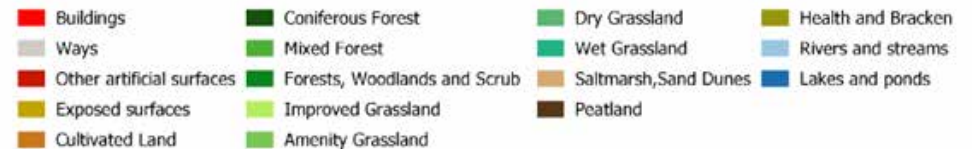


Figure 4.12 Land Cover for DZ, 2019



It is important to determine the predominant land use within the DZ to make sense of the emissions originating from LULUCF. Land use and land-use change contribute substantially to global greenhouse gas emissions. However, they also offer significant potential to reduce emissions, through carbon sequestration (removing CO₂ from the atmosphere and storing it within soil, vegetation, and other organic matter).

In Figure 4.13, the proportion of the land uses in the DZ is shown. As mentioned, there is a predominance of peatland at 37.8%. However, there is also a high share of grassland, salt marsh and swamp at 40.3%. These types of land cannot sequester CO₂ emissions, thus promoting a higher presence and production of GHG emissions. Finally, there is only 11.5% of forest, woodland and scrub in the DZ, which is the type of land type that has CO₂ sequestration ability.

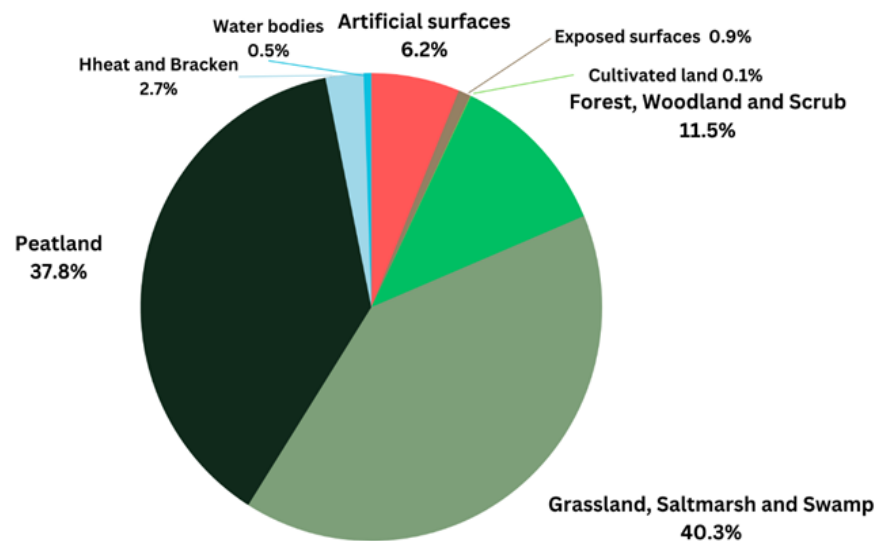


Figure 4.13: Land use area in the DZ, 2019

4.3.3.6 Waste

The emissions coming from waste is 0.62ktCO₂eq, representing 1.6% of the total DZ emissions.

The total amount of waste produced in the DZ is equal to 1,282 tonnes annually, calculated for a total of 1,387 households.

4.3.3.7 Donegal County Council Emissions within the DZ

Total energy consumption by Donegal County Council within the DZ in 2019 was 0.10 ktCO₂eq. The emissions were calculated only from the energy consumption for public lighting. In total, 859 streetlights are located within the DZ, 576 being LED bulbs, 232 SON and 51 SOX bulbs.

4.3.4 Local policies and plans

There following plans and policies that were consulted as part of the development of the DZ chapter of this LACAP:

- County Donegal Development Plan 2018 - 2024
- Draft Donegal Co Development Plan 2024 - 2030;
- LAN Fuinnimh Energy Master Plan

4.3.5 Role of Donegal County Council

The core role of Donegal County Council in the DZ is as a facilitator. To support and deliver the DZ plan, action will be needed by Donegal County Council, but also other public sector organisations, local business and industry, social and community groups, and the wider public.

Recognising this, Donegal County Council will play several roles while supporting climate action in the An Fálcarrach/Gort an Choirce DZ.

These roles are:

Full accountability delivering on climate action in areas within the local authority's direct control including own buildings, infrastructure, systems, operations, and staff.

Facilitation delivering on climate action by coordinating, connecting, and linking others. This can include stakeholder engagement, capacity-building, developing partnerships, funding, and policy support, among other enabling activities.

Advocacy communicating, influencing, and building on a shared vision of the DZ, as well as raising awareness of the DZ plan and developing recommended and new actions with a wide network of local stakeholders to achieve support from the local community.

4.3.6 Register of Opportunities

A particular feature of the DZ is the portfolio and pipeline of interventions, projects and actions curated specifically through responses that include mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity, to deliver the targets set for energy and emission reductions. This portfolio, known as the Register of Opportunities, is used to assist in determining strategic priority areas and actions to be commenced or delivered over the lifetime of the plan.

This Register of Opportunities has been developed through consultation with the local community partners LAN Fuinnimh SEC and Donegal County Council. As part of the development of this chapter the local community partners were invited to participate and provide their input to opportunities for the DZ area. Following on from this a Register of Opportunities has been compiled that reflects the community input and the role of the Local Authority.

Falcarragh / Gort a' Choirce.			
Theme:	Opportunity:	Role of LA:	Dependencies:
DZ G & L	To establish a dz stakeholder group within the Decarbonisation Zone, with both DZ communities in Donegal, and to advocate for the establishment of regional and national DZ collaboration for all DZ communities.	Facilitate & Coordinate	Stakeholder engagement, Funding & Resources, Regional & National support
DZ G & L	To engage with the local community stakeholders to develop a Vision and action plan for the Falcarragh / Gort a' Choirce DZ.	Facilitate & Coordinate	Stakeholder engagement
DZ G & L	To identify and support the DZ in seeking funding for the implementation of the DZ Action Plan.	Facilitate & Coordinate	Stakeholder engagement / Funding & Resources
DZ BE	To support the initiatives of the North West Regional Energy Agency to improve energy efficiency, retrofitting, renewable energy technologies, local community-based renewable energy and circular economy projects for homes, businesses, public buildings and communities.	Facilitate & Coordinate	Funding & Resources
DZ TR	To support sustainable travel initiatives in the DZ.	Influence	Funding & Resources
DZ NE	To support sustainable and regenerative agricultural initiatives.	Influence	Funding & Resources

THEME KEY	
DZ G & L	Decarbonising Zone Governance and Leadership
DZ BE	Decarbonising Zone Built Environment
DZ TR	Decarbonising Zone Transport
DZ NE	Decarbonising Zone Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure

4.3.7 Next Steps:

Further engagement will be required to develop a priority list of actions outlined in a DZ Action Plan and Implementation Plan.

With respect to specific DZ actions that may be identified through consultation with the DZ communities, Donegal County Council will ensure that they are aligned with the conservation objectives of European Sites in the wider area surrounding An Fálcarrach/Gort an Choirce DZ.

In developing the DZ Action Plan, Donegal County Council will support the protection and maintenance of our freshwater and transitional water systems, to comply with Water Framework Directive objectives.

4.4 Carndonagh DZ

Carndonagh is a medium sized urban centre set in the rural heartland of Inishowen. The town has two significant rivers running through it from south to north, extensive blanket peatland to the south, ancient woodland to the west, and a valuable Special Preservation Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) to the north.

The DZ area encompasses the town of Carndonagh (“Carn Domhnach” in Irish) and its outskirts in County Donegal. It covers an area of 12km². The DZ boundary is shown in Figure 4.14.

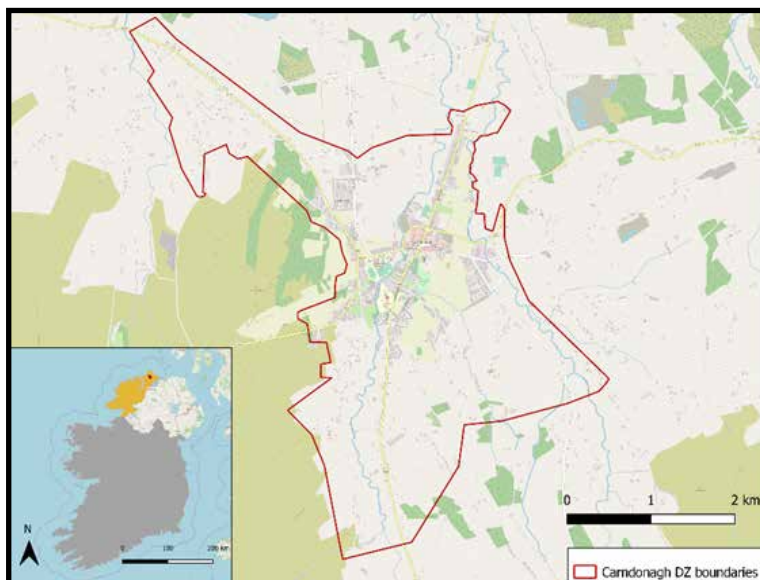


Figure 4.14 Map of Carndonagh Decarbonisation Zone

The population of the DZ area Carndonagh as of the 2016 census is 3352, 2% of the total County population. The population density is 268 people per square kilometre.

4.4.1 Community Partners - ECO CARN Network

ECO Carn is an umbrella group coordinated by Inishowen Development Partnership and includes a broad range of Carndonagh’s community, voluntary and statutory groups including the Inishowen SEC and Inishowen Rivers Trust.

The ECO Carn Network developed a Biodiversity Action Plan for Carndonagh in 2021. Its development emerged from the ‘Envision Inishowen’ series, part of a number of conversations across 10 communities in Inishowen, facilitated by Inishowen Development Partnership. A new network was then formed - ECO Carn - a collaboration of community organisations, schools, and statutory organisations, who came together to steer the development of their plan and to lead in its implementation.

The Inishowen SEC has an Energy Master Plan in place and recently launched the Inishowen SEC Strategic Plan. The Energy Master Plan will be used as a roadmap for Inishowen’s progression towards sustainable energy and can be used to apply for capital grants to upgrade existing housing and commercial stock. While the EMP covers the wider Inishowen area, the area of Carndonagh was selected to go forward as a DZ. The ECO Carn Network (including representatives from the Inishowen SEC) is the community partner for the DZ.

4.4.2 Decarbonising Zone Vision

Through consultation, Donegal County Council and the local community through the ECO Carn Network will develop a vision statement for the Carndonagh DZ.



4.4.3 Baseline Emissions Inventory for Carndonagh DZ

Donegal County Council engaged Bable Consulting Ltd to carry out a Tier 3 BEI of GHG emissions for the baseline year 2019 in accordance with the requirements of the Climate Action Planning Guidelines in particular Annex D.

The Tier 3 BEI is the bottom-up and spatially led approach for data analysis, which uses local-scale datasets (where available) to look at the DZ's GHG emissions across various sectors including:

- Residential
- Commercial & Industrial Processes
- Transport
- Agriculture
- LULUCF
- Waste
- Donegal County Council's Own Emissions

Full details of the Baseline Emissions Inventory for the DZ accompany this LACAP.

The total baseline GHG emissions for the DZ in 2019 is 34.27ktCO₂e, with the Transport Sector accounting for the greatest percentage at 37.7%. Other significant emission sectors include, Residential (30.7%) and Non Residential (25.1%).

A summary is shown on Figure 4.15.

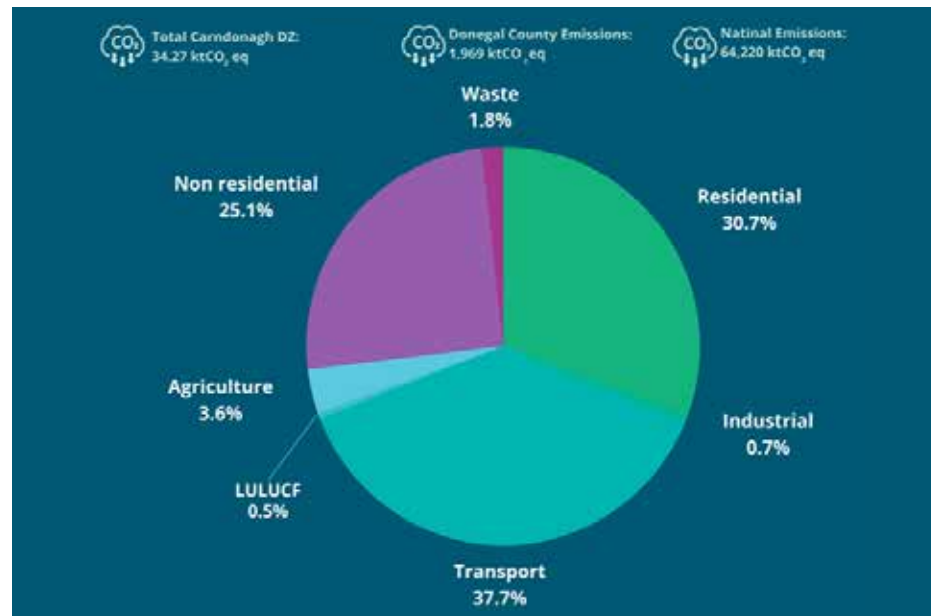


Figure 4.15 - Baseline Emissions Inventory Results - Carndonagh DZ

4.4.3.1 Residential

The Residential sector includes emissions from household activities. The Census 2016 data shows that there are 1,339 residential properties in the Carndonagh DZ.

When energy use is converted to GHG emissions, the residential sector's total emissions are 10.52 ktCO₂e. In the DZ, the emissions for the Residential sector represents 30.7% of the total. The emissions from electricity consumption accounts for 24%. Most emissions in the DZ's households come from space heating (7.99 ktCO₂e). At a county and national scale, space heating is also the primary source of emissions in the Residential sector, following the same proportion of the DZ. The Residential emissions for the DZ, County Donegal, and national levels are shown in Figure 4.15.

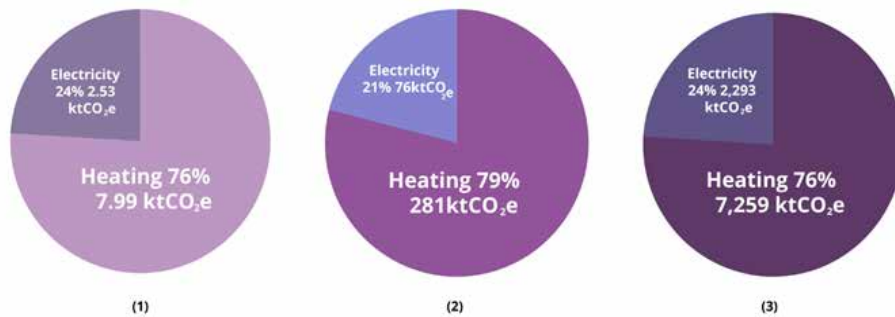


Figure 4.15 Decarbonisation Zone (1), County Donegal (2) and National split (3) of Residential energy CO₂ emissions

The majority of households use oil and peat as fuel sources for space heating. Specifically, 51% of all households in the DZ have oil-fired boilers and 24% use peat.

Building Energy Ratings

Building Energy Ratings (BERs) measure the energy performance of a building. They are measured on a scale from A1 to G, where A1 is the most efficient and G is the least. The level is calculated based on the amount of energy required to heat, cool, ventilate, and light a building according to SEAI-registered BER assessors. Figure 4.16 shows the distribution of the most recent BER ratings in the DZ. Figure 4.17 indicates this distribution of the average in the DZ.

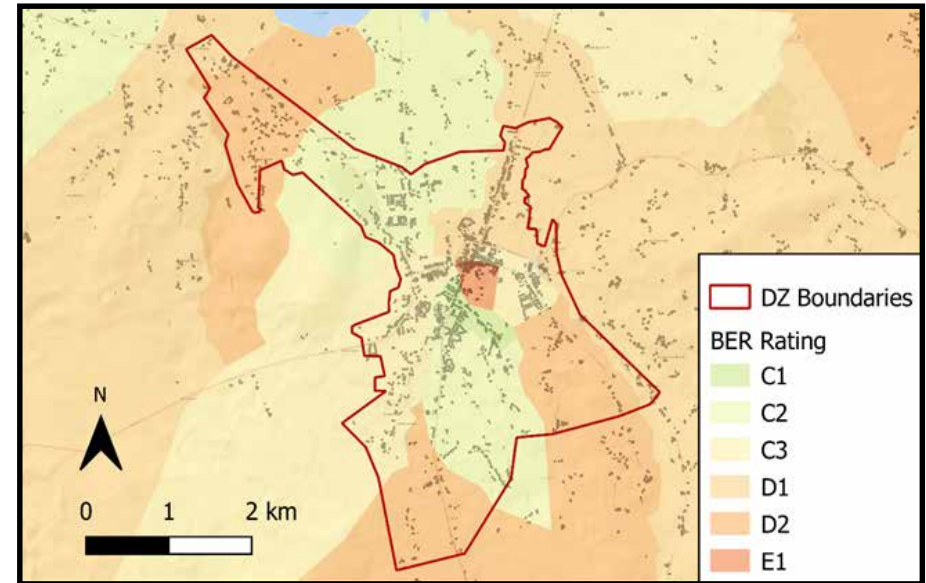


Figure 4.16 Average Residential BER rating per small area in the DZ

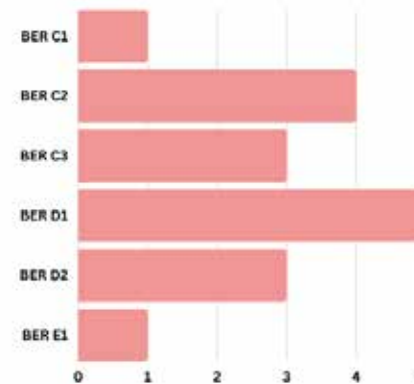


Figure 4.17. Domestic BER Distribution

As indicated by Figures 4.16 and 4.17, the BER rating for the small areas in the DZ is predominantly low, ranging mainly from D2 to C2.

4.4.3.2 Transport

The Transport sector accounts for 37.7% (12.92 ktCO₂eq) of the total CO₂ emissions in the DZ. Figure 4.18 shows the emissions breakdown per vehicle type. Goods vehicles contribute the highest proportion of emissions at 68.3%, followed by private cars at 30.9%.

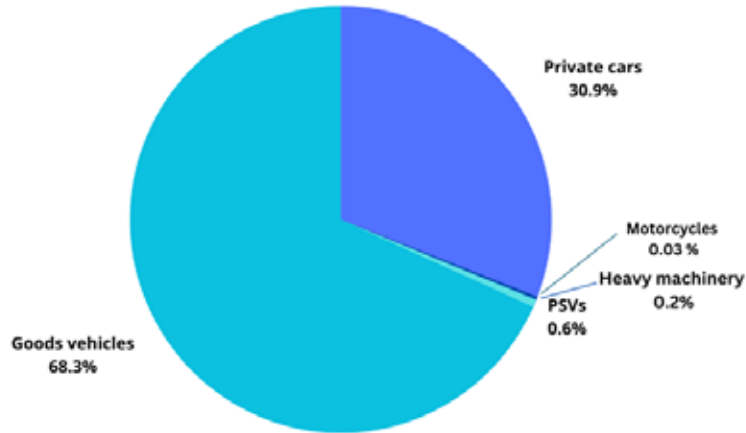


Figure 4.18 Breakdown of Transport emissions for each type of vehicle

Fuel Type for private cars was further broken down as per Figure 4.19.

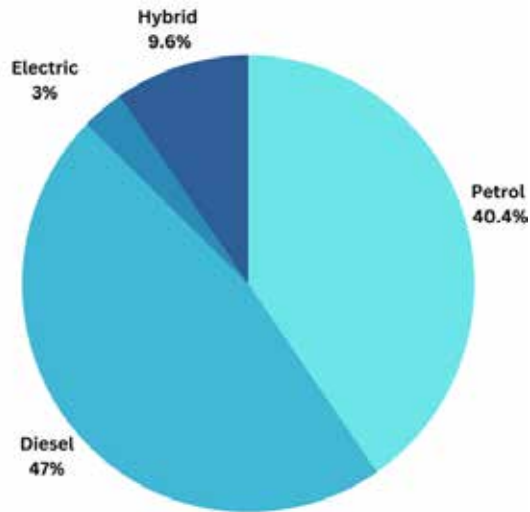


Figure 4.19 Private cars breakdown by type of fuel in the DZ. 2016

There is a high dependency on private cars, it is estimated that of the mechanically propelled vehicles within the DZ area, 1,411 are private cars.

4.4.3.3 Non residential and Industrial

The Carndonagh area is well served by educational facilities at primary and post-primary levels. There are a total of 6 primary schools and 1 secondary school in the DZ area.

Emissions from the non-residential refer to commercial and academic activities. Figure 4.20 shows that industrial activities contribute 2% to the sector emissions. The majority of emissions stem from commercial activities and educational activities. In total, there are 8.83kt CO₂e of Industrial and non-residential emissions.

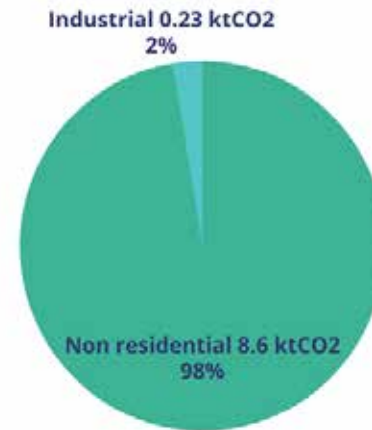


Figure 4.20 Non-residential and Industrial emissions in the DZ. 2019

The calculation of the emissions for commercial buildings was done through the BER rating, showing the average energy consumption. Figure 4.21 shows the majority of commercial buildings have either a C2 or an D2 energy rating.

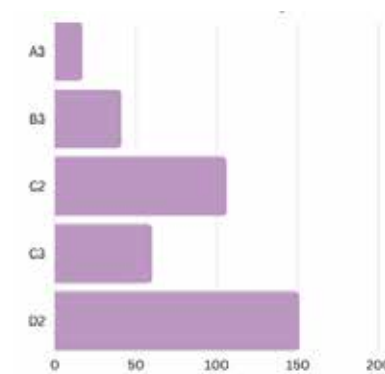


Figure 4.21 Distribution of commercial buildings depending on BER rating in the DZ

Table 4.1 shows the mass of CO₂ eq for both commercial buildings and schools. Educational institutions contribute only 0.32 kt CO₂ eq to the total emissions. On the other hand, commercial buildings generate 8.28 kt CO₂ eq.

Source	ktCO ₂ e
Commercial buildings	8.28
Schools	0.32
TOTAL	8.6

Table 4.1 Non-residential emissions breakdown in the DZ, 2019.

4.4.3.4 Agriculture

In the DZ, the agricultural sector accounts for 1.22 kt CO₂e or 3.6% of the total CO₂ eq. emissions. Compared to the county and national levels, the DZ contributes a smaller percentage of emissions from agriculture due to a very low proportion of arable land. The sources of emissions from agriculture are from livestock and agriculture activities were obtained from the “AgriLivestock” and “AgriOther” datasets in MapElre. Figure 4.22 shows the breakdown of emissions deriving from agriculture.

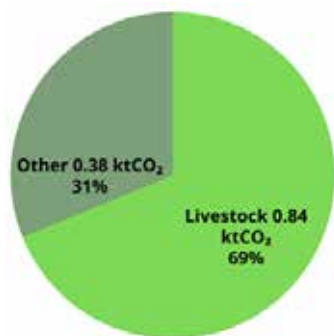
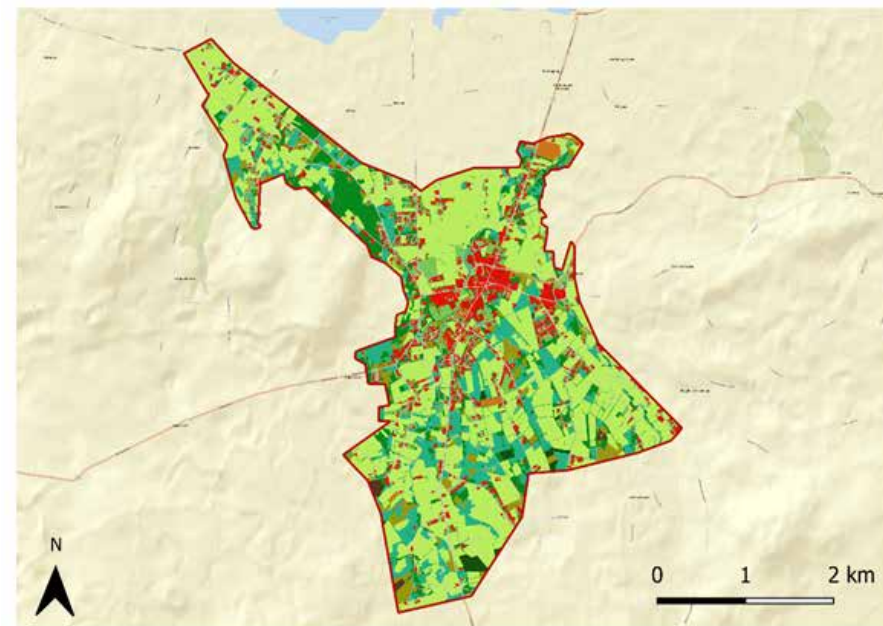


Figure 4.22 Agriculture emissions breakdown in the DZ, 2019

Livestock emissions accounted for 0.83 ktCO₂eq, equivalent to 69% of the total agricultural emissions in the DZ. Emissions named “Other”, representing emissions from machinery and vehicles, inorganic fertilisers, soil processes and applications, amounted to 0.38 kt CO₂eq or 31% of the total sector emissions.

4.4.3.5 LULUCF

Figure 4.23 shows a land cover map of the DZ. There is a predominance of grassland areas around the urbanized settlement of Carndonagh.



National Land Cover Map

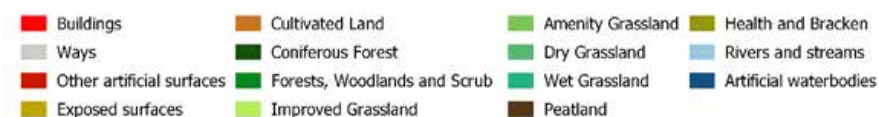


Figure 4.23 Land Cover for DZ, 2019

It is important to determine the predominant land use within the DZ to make sense of the emissions originating from LULUCF. Land use and land-use change contribute substantially to global GHGs. However, they also offer significant potential to reduce emissions, through carbon sequestration (removing CO₂ from the atmosphere and storing it within soil, vegetation, and other organic matter).

Figure 4.24 shows the proportion of the land uses in the DZ. As mentioned, there is a high predominance of grassland at 66.2% land coverage. However, there is also a high share of artificial surfaces. These types of land cannot sequester CO₂ emissions, thus promoting a higher presence and production of GHG emissions. There is only 13.8% of forest, woodland and scrub in the DZ, which is the type of land type that has CO₂ sequestration ability.

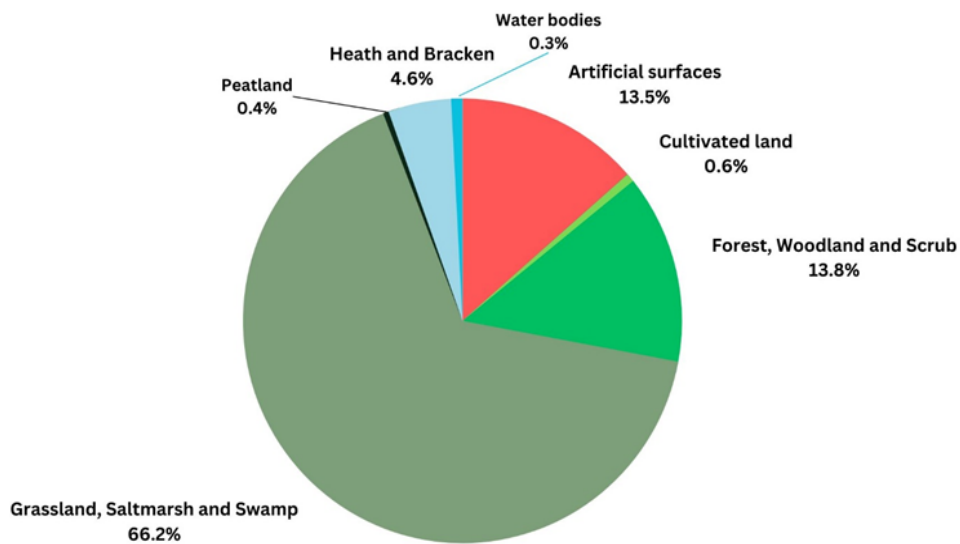


Figure 4.24 Land use area in the DZ.2019

4.4.3.6 Waste

The emissions coming from the waste sector are 0.6 ktCO₂e, representing 1.8% of the total DZ emissions.

The total amount of waste produced in the DZ is equal to 1,237 tonnes annually calculated for a total of 1,339 households

4.4.3.7 Donegal County Council Emissions within the DZ

Based on data availability, the Donegal County Council's own emissions were calculated for public lighting energy consumption, the Fire Station electrical consumption and the Public Service Centre electricity and heating consumption.

In total, LA's own emissions in the DZ are 0.2144 ktCO₂eq. Table 4.2 shows the breakdown of the different sources of CO₂eq emissions.



Source	ktCO ₂ e	Total	
Public lighting	0.0059	0.2144 ktCO ₂ e	
Fire station	0.0785		
Public Service Centre	Electricity		0.027
	Heating		0.103

Table 4.2 DZ Donegal County Council's own emissions breakdown

4.4.4 Local policies and plans

The plans and policies that were consulted as part of the development of the DZ chapter for the Carndonagh DZ include:

- County Donegal Development Plan 2018 - 2024
- Draft County Donegal Development Plan 2024 - 2030
- Inishowen Energy Master Plan
- Inishowen SEC Strategic Plan
- The Envision Series
- The ECO Carn Biodiversity Action Plan
- Smarter Community Plan for Carndonagh.

4.4.5 Role of Donegal County Council

The core role of Donegal County Council in the DZ is as a facilitator. To support and deliver the DZ plan, action will be needed by Donegal County Council, but also other public sector organisations, local business and industry, social and community groups, and the wider public.

Recognising this, Donegal County Council will play several roles while supporting climate action in Carndonagh. These roles are:

Full accountability - delivering on climate action in areas within the local authority's direct control including own buildings, infrastructure, systems, operations, and staff.

Facilitation - delivering on climate action by coordinating, connecting, and linking others. This can include stakeholder engagement, capacity-building, developing partnerships, funding, and policy support, among other enabling activities.

Advocacy - communicating, influencing, and building on a shared vision of the DZ, as well as raising awareness of the DZ plan and developing recommended and new actions with a wide network of local stakeholders to achieve support from the local community.

4.4.6 Register of Opportunities

A particular feature of the DZ is the portfolio and pipeline of interventions, projects and actions curated specifically through responses that include mitigation, adaptation, and biodiversity, to deliver the targets set for energy and emission reductions. This portfolio known as the Register of Opportunities is used to assist in determining strategic priority areas and actions to be commenced or delivered over the lifetime of the plan.

This Register of Opportunities has been developed through consultation with the local community partners, the ECO Carn Network and Donegal County Council.

As part of the development of this chapter the local community partners were invited to participate and provide their input to opportunities across the six themes of Governance & Leadership, Built Environment, Transport, Natural Environment, Community Resilience and Sustainable Resource Management. Following on from this, a Register of Opportunities has been compiled that reflects the community input and the role of Donegal County Council.

Carndonagh			
Theme:	Opportunity:	Role of LA:	Dependencies:
DZ G & L	To establish a dz stakeholder group within the Decarbonisation Zone, with both DZ communities in Donegal, and to advocate for the establishment of regional and national DZ collaboration for all DZ communities.	Facilitate & Coordinate	Stakeholder engagement, Funding & Resources, Regional & National support
DZ G & L	To engage with the local community stakeholders to develop a Vision and action plan of the Carndonagh DZ.	Facilitate & Coordinate	Stakeholder engagement
DZ G & L	To identify and support the DZ in seeking funding for the implementation of the DZ Action Plan.	Facilitate & Coordinate	Stakeholder engagement, resources
DZ BE	To support the initiatives of the North West Regional Energy Agency to improve energy efficiency, retrofitting, renewable energy technologies, local community-based renewable energy and circular economy projects for home, businesses, public building and communities.	Facilitate & Coordinate	Funding & Resources
DZ TR	To support the delivery of enhanced public transport and transport infrastructure in rural areas including the projects listed for Donegal under the Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan (Carndonagh to Bunrana).	Advocate	Funding & Resources
DZ TR	To support sustainable travel initiatives in the DZ.	Influence	Funding & Resources
DZ NE	To support the implementation of and build on the ECO Carn Network's Biodiversity Action Plan.	Influence	Funding & Resources
DZ NE	To support sustainable and regenerative agricultural initiatives.	Influence	Funding & Resources
DZ CR	To support development of the ECO Inishowen network.	Influence	Funding & Resources
DZ SRM	To support local & national sustainable resource initiatives e.g. circular economy, reducing single use items, water conservation, food waste initiatives etc.	Advocate	Funding & Resources

THEME KEY	
DZ G & L	Decarbonising Zone Governance and Leadership
DZ BE	Decarbonising Zone Built Environment
DZ TR	Decarbonising Zone Transport
DZ NE	Decarbonising Zone Natural Environment and Green Infrastructure
DZ CR	Decarbonising Zone Communities Resilience
DZ SRM	Decarbonising Zone Sustainability and Resource Management

4.4 (C) Next Steps:

Further engagement will be required to develop a priority list of actions outlined in a DZ Action Plan and Implementation Plan. With respect to specific DZ actions that may be identified through consultation with the DZ communities, Donegal County Council will ensure that they are aligned with the conservation objectives for the Trawbreaga Bay SPA and North Inishowen Coast SAC.

In developing the DZ Action Plan, Donegal County Council will support the protection and maintenance of our freshwater and transitional water systems, to comply with Water Framework Directive objectives.







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5

IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING

5.1 Planning for implementation

This Draft Climate Action Plan (LACAP) will be implemented by Donegal County Council. Whilst the plan requires a whole-of-Council approach, the ownership of the Draft LACAP is held within the Water and Environment Directorate.

A Climate Action Team is in the process of being established in Donegal County Council. This team includes a Climate Action Coordinator and Climate Action Officer. A Community Climate Action Officer will join the team in November 2023. The role of this team is to:

- mainstream climate action into the activities of Donegal County Council,
- monitor the implementation of the actions of the LACAP and to
- coordinate the reporting and evaluation of the LACAP, following its approval by the Elected Members.
- be the point of contact for the public to learn about climate action in the County.

Donegal County Council will continue to work collaboratively and in partnership with a range of key stakeholders to support the delivery of this LACAP.

These partnerships can provide opportunities for collaboration on projects, shared learnings, technical support and leveraging of funding opportunities during the implementation of actions.

It is also clear that climate change is a transboundary challenge; it does not stop at political and geographical borders. As such, a regional approach has been agreed by the local authorities in the Atlantic Seaboard North CARO region, whereby they can collaborate closely on the implementation of the LACAPs.

Border regions are amongst the most vulnerable to hydro-climatic hazards such as flooding mainly due to a lack of joined up thinking and action around shared environmental issues and climate adaptation, (Journal of Spatial Planning in Ireland - Murphy, 2016). Donegal's geographical location in the North-West of Ireland means that we share much of our county border with Northern Ireland including Derry City and Strabane District Council and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council. The North-West region is innovative and forward thinking in its approach to transboundary collaboration to ensure such vulnerabilities are not realised.

Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council have formed strong links and partnerships through existing cross – border structures such as the North-West Regional Development Group. This Joint Committee drives cross border cooperation, with strong linkages to the respective programmes for government, North and South through the North-West Strategic Growth Partnership.

Within this overall framework, Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council have prepared the North West Regional Energy Strategy, the Green Transformation Statement, and the North West Climate Action Framework (NWCAF).

The North-West Regional Energy Agency (NWREA) is being established as the vehicle to deliver on the Regional Energy Strategy. The NWREA is a cross border collaboration between Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council as part of their joint commitment to becoming a leader in the achievement of national and international climate change targets, and for driving the transition towards a smart low carbon economy within the energy sector of the North-West region. The NWREA will work with and support the DCC Climate Action Team in implementation of this LACAP.

The NWCAF mission is to deliver climate action on a cross-border, cross sectoral and multi-agency basis to achieve greater resilience to the effects of climate change while leading the way in reducing the effects and mitigating against future global warming. Therefore, the NWCAF is at the core of Donegal County Council's LACAP and will continue to play a key role in our Strategic Goals, Actions and Implementation.

Following approval of the LACAP, an Implementation Plan/Summary will be developed for each action, which will set out in detail how the action will be delivered including, noting the responsible department and timescales. Donegal County Council will align the timing of internal implementation reporting intervals with that of sectoral progress reporting requirements.

5.2 Funding and Partnerships

To lead by example and drive the transition to a climate neutral society, Donegal County Council will need access to adequate funding for climate action projects towards achieving its 2030 and 2050 targets. Local authorities can access various types of funding such as government grants, European funds, private sector investment and community co-financing. It is recognised that while new climate action targeted funding calls may become available in the future, already established funding bodies will introduce or increase the level of funding streams to climate action focused categories. Donegal County Council will continue to pursue new and existing funding opportunities from both European and National bodies that are aligned with its climate action objectives.

Partnerships are also a key ingredient towards realising low carbon solutions for the sector. The private sector is already playing a role towards achieving the National Climate Objective and this type of collaboration can enhance the capabilities of the sector even further in achieving reductions in Ireland's greenhouse gases by 51% by 2030 and becoming climate neutral by no later than 2050. There are also benefits for the local government sector in partnering with the Third Level sector. The Third Level sector can provide research and development expertise to help local authorities and implement innovative solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and adapt to climate change. These partnerships can also help local authorities access funding opportunities for climate action projects and initiatives. Donegal County Council will encourage and facilitate collaboration with the private sector and Third Level sector where possible.

5.3 Tracking and Reporting Progress through Key Performance Indicators

Strengthened climate action policy at national level inspired a determined response and commitment by local government, as a sector. This commitment is set out in the County and City Management Association (CCMA) published strategy on behalf of local government entitled Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030 (DECA 2021). A key consideration for the local government sector on this strengthened role on climate action is accountability, and in particular the ability to track, measure and report on progress in delivering effective climate action at both local authority and sectoral levels.

Each action within the LACAP has at least one associated key performance indicator (KPI). The KPIs are a central component in progress monitoring and will be tracked throughout the Plan's lifetime as actions are progressed and implemented.

An internal Climate Action Reporting System will be developed which will enable departments and sections to report progress made against the actions they are leading on. The reporting system will be managed by the Climate

Action Team and all information reported will be collated by the team for the purposes of evaluation and reporting.

Donegal County Council reports on an annual basis on the themes below to the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA):

- Climate Action Resources.
- Climate Action Training for local authority staff and elected members.
- Actions delivered.
- Enterprise support in area of climate action.
- Energy efficiency.
- Emission reductions.
- Active travel measures.
- Severe weather response.

Performance on the delivery of energy efficiency and emission reductions relating to the Council's infrastructure and assets, as prescribed by national climate obligations, will continue to be tracked through the established Monitoring and Reporting (M&R) system managed by the Sustainable Authority of Ireland (SEAI).

It is envisaged that a national mechanism for the reporting of Local Authority Climate Action Plan progress will be established by CARO and the LGMA and as such Donegal County Council commits to reporting progress in line with the reporting requirements.

5.4 Covenant of Mayors

Donegal County Council is a signatory to the Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy and as such commits to the completion and monitoring of a Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan (SECAP).



5.5 Sustainable Development Goals



The 2018-2020 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) National Implementation Plan acknowledged that local government “has a crucial role to play in translating national policies into tangible practical actions that can help to concretise the SDG objectives into our individual and communities’ behaviours and goals.” Ireland’s Second National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024, intends to build on the role of local government in Ireland and incorporates specific actions to do so which include:

- i. Showcasing, sharing and building on existing initiatives
- ii. Capacity building and awareness raising
- iii. Embedding the SDGs in Governance and reporting frameworks
- iv. Incorporating the SDGs within local planning frameworks
- v. Community Engagement

Furthermore, local authorities are recognised as one of Agenda 2030’s nine “Major Groups”, which play a crucial role in sustainable development 31 and Agenda 2030 also highlights the role of local authorities and communities in sustainable urban development.

Donegal County Council is working to advance the SDGs, by:

- incorporating the SDGs in their Corporate and County Development Plans and;
- aligning the actions in this LACAP with SDGs.







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6

GLOSSARY, ABBREVIATIONS & REFERENCES

GLOSSARY

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Baseline Emissions Inventory (BEI)	The sum and categorisation of the total greenhouse gas emissions accounted for in your city in a given year. This is the year against which future progress is compared.
Baseline year	This is the year in which the BEI was calculated, with which future progress in emissions reductions is compared.
Biodiversity	The variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.
Climate adaptation	The process of adjustment to actual or expected climate and its effects in order to moderate harm or take advantages of beneficial opportunities.
Climate hazard	Extreme weather events or natural disasters that are primarily caused by climate-related factors. They can cause harm to human health, livelihoods, or natural resources.
Climate mitigation	The process of reducing climate change which involves reducing the flow of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere either by reducing the sources of these gases or enhancing the sinks that accumulate and store these gases.
Climate neutrality	The idea of achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions by balancing those emissions so they are equal to or less than the emissions that get removed through the planet's natural absorption. This reduction of emissions would occur through climate action.
Climate Risk Assessment	A process for identifying and evaluating the potential impacts of climate change on various sectors and activities.
Decarbonisation Zone (or decarbonising zone)	A spatial area identified by the local authority. It is an area in which a range of climate mitigation measures can co-exist to address local low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions and climate needs.
Evidence-based	An approach that emphasises the practical application of the findings of the best available current research.
Extreme weather events	A time and place in which weather, climate, or environmental conditions rank above a threshold value near the upper or lower ends of the range of historical events.
Greenhouse gas emissions	Greenhouse gases (GHGs) trap solar energy and prevent the sun's energy from bouncing back into space thus creating the greenhouse effect. The main GHG emissions are water vapor (H ₂ O), carbon dioxide (CO ₂), methane (CH ₄), nitrous oxide (N ₂ O), hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF ₆). Greenhouse gas emissions from human activities compound the greenhouse effect, contributing to climate change.
Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP)	Plans to help local authorities address in an integrated way the mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions and climate adaptation. Under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, each local authority is required to prepare a local authority climate action plan for its respective administrative area. Once adopted by the local councils, each plan will be valid for five years and is subject to update at least every five years.
MapElre	National Mapping of Greenhouse Gas and Non-greenhouse Gas Emissions Sources Project (Environmental Protection Agency).
Paris Agreement	A legally binding international treaty on climate change agreed in 2015 at UNFCCC's COP21.

ABBREVIATIONS

ACRES	Agricultural Climate Rural Environmental Scheme
ASBN	Atlantic Sea Board North
ATU	Atlantic Technological University
BEI	Baseline Emissions Inventory
BER	Building Energy Rating
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CARO	Climate Action Regional Office
CCMA	County and City Management Association
CCRA	Climate Change Risk Assessment
CFERM	Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management
CO2	Carbon Dioxide
COP21	Conference of the Parties 21
CPG	Corporate Policy Group
DCC	Donegal County Council
DECA 2030	Delivering Effective Climate Action 2030
DECC	Department of Environment, Climate and Communications
DHLGH	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
DLDC	Donegal Local Development Company
DZ	Decarbonising Zone
EMP	Energy Master Plan
ENMS	Energy Management System
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
EV	Electric Vehicle

GHG	Greenhouse Gases
GPP	Green Public Procurement
GWP	Global Warming Potential
GWS	Group Water Scheme
HSE	Health Service Executive
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
kWh	Kilowatt Per Hour
LACAP	Local Authority Climate Action Plan
LAWPRO	Local Authority Waters Programme
LCDC	Local Community Development Committees
LECP	Local Economic & Community Plan
LEO	Local Enterprise Office
LGMA	Local Government Management Agency
LPG	Liquified Petroleum Gas
LULUCF	Land Use, Land-use Change & Forestry
MARWP	Multi-Annual Rural Water Programme
MD	Municipal District
NAF	National Adaptation Framework
NBS	Nature Based Solutions
NPWS	National Park and Wildlife Service
NTA	National Transport Authority
NWCAF	North West Climate Action Framework
NWREA	North West Regional Energy Agency
NZEB	Nearly Zero Energy Building

OGP	Office of Government Procurement
OPW	Office of Public Works
PLEEP	Public Lighting Energy Efficiency Project
PPN	Public Participation Network
PV	Photovoltaic
RMO	Roads Management Office
RRDF	Rural Regeneration and Development Fund
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SEAI	Sustainable Energy Agency Ireland
SEC's	Sustainable Energy Communities
SECAP	Sustainable Energy and Climate Action Plan
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SLA	Service Level Agreement
SME's	Small and Medium Sized Enterprises
SMT	Senior Management Team
SPC	Strategic Policy Committee
SUDS	Sustainable Drainage Systems
TEN -T	Trans European Transport Network
UE	Uisce Éireann
UFW	Unaccounted for Water
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
WERLA	Waste Enforcement Regional Lead Authority
ZEB	Zero Emission Building
ZEVI	Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland

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